MUSLIM ARCHITECTURE IN BENGAL



AHMAD HASAN DANI

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IN
BENGAL

By

Ahmad Hasan Dani, M. A., PH. D. (LONDON)

Reader in History
Dacca University
&
Curator Dacca Museum

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To

My Ancestors

who left Kashmir about 1850 and

settled among the Gonds in Chhattisgadh

to spread culture and

are now lying buried in Basna—

the village of my childhood

Preface

In the following pages an attempt is made to trace the origin and development of the Muslim architecture in Bengal from the historical angle. The term Bengal has been taken to include all those areas which fell under the *Sultanat-i-Bangala* or *Subah-i-Bangala* during the rule of the Muslims. The history of the development has been traced on the basis of the surviving monuments in these areas. The book does not attempt to give an exhaustive list of all of them, but fairly well represents the buildings of the different localities. The treatment may not satisfy the engineers nor even the architects, as the limited number of illustrations do not give all the details that their special technical knowledge demands. It is primarily intended for the students and general readers who wish to understand the different architectural features that evolved in the conditions of Bengal and led to the formulation of different styles of buildings. It is to the discovery of Bengali forms of architecture that the book is mainly devoted with a view to drawing the attention of my countrymen to those buildings where our ancestors lived and dreamt. Perchance the modern builders, in their hurry and imitation of the western forms, may like to glance through a few pictures and see some good in their own traditions. Let the romance in ruins open their eyes to what their ancestors lived for.

The materials for the book were collected during my field survey in 1948-49, when I was serving in the department of archaeology, Government of Pakistan, and the draft was completed in 1950. I gave it to the University of Dacca in 1951 for publication, but the paucity of funds stood in the way. It was by good

fortune that my former student, Mr. Muinuddin Ahmad Khan, brought it to the notice of the Bureau of National Reconstruction, Government of East Pakistan, who were good enough to make a grant of Rs. 5000·00 towards the cost of publication. The Council of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan accepted to bring out the book and meet the remaining expenses. I have taken this opportunity to revise the original draft and make it up to date. My indebtedness to the earlier workers in the field will be clear from the references that I have given in the text. For the photographs I am obliged to the departments of archaeology, Government of Pakistan and Government of India. I am specially thankful to Mr. S. A. Siddiqi the photographer of East Pakistan Circle, who accompanied me to most of these monuments. The text figures, other than those acknowledged, were drawn by Mr. Md. Ibrahim, the draftsman of the same circle. The map was drawn by my pupil, Mr. Enamul Huq, and the cover was designed by Mr. Qamrul Hasan of the Design Centre, East Pakistan.

I must also thank my wife Mrs. Safiya Sultana Dani, who helped me in reading through the proofs, and my daughter Fauziya and son Anis, who assisted me in preparing the index.

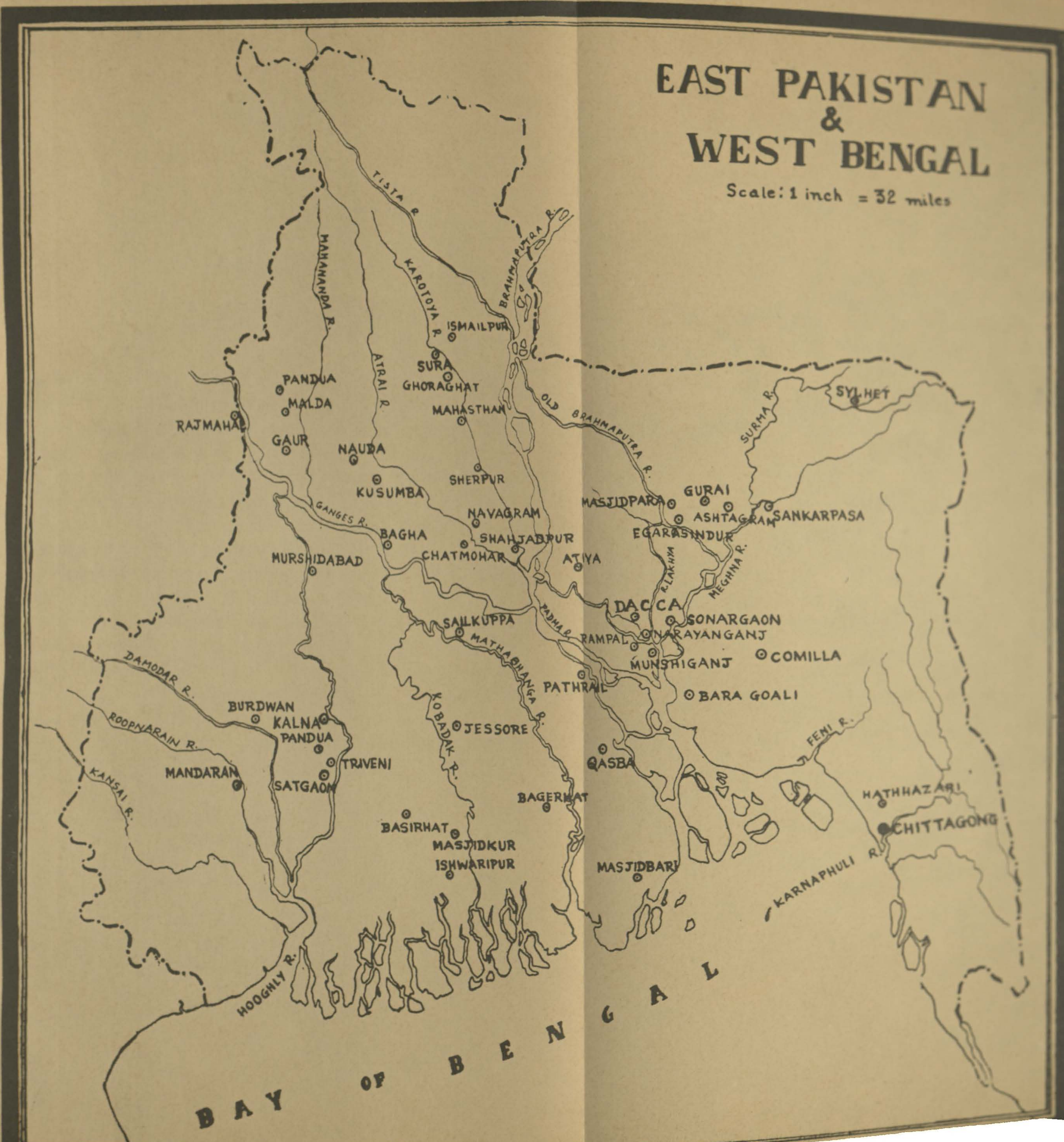
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. The Muslim Conquest: The victory of Muhammad Bakht-yar Khalji at Nadiya[1] in A. D. 1204[2] marks a new epoch in the history and culture of Bengal. The history henceforth turns on to record the onward march of the Muslim arms from West Bengal to South and East until the entire Gangeto-Brahmaputra delta was brought under their complete sway. This region, which henceforth bore the name of *Sultanat-i-Bangala* or *Subah-i-Bangala*, was in the past surcharged with Hindu-Buddhist spirit, but now it felt the impact of Islam. The early Arab[3] contact with the Bengal coast has left no recognisable remains on the surface, except a faint memory in "Buddermokan" associated with the Muslims as recorded by Harvey[4]. The influence of Islam in the cultural field was gradual but definite, and as a result of the clash of its ideals with those of the earlier forces we find the people of

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1. Minhaj-us-Siraj, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Eng. Tr. by Raverty, Pp. 556-59.
2. See *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1954, Pp. 133-47.
3. *Proceedings of the First Pakistan History Conference*, Karachi, 1951, Pp. 184-202
4. G.E. Hravey, History of Burma, Longmans, 1925, p.137. At Udaipur in Tippera State in India one such building of a late period is in existence. It is a *do-chala* type of building. See for photograph opp. P.218 in *Sri-Rajmala*, by Kali Prasanna Sen. Agartala, Vol. III.

this region coming within the fold of Islam in such a great number that the whole atmosphere of this humid land today breathes in the spirit of the desert-born Islam.

2. *The Muslim spirit:* This change is the result of a slow process but man cannot wait for the day when clashes cool down to give place to harmony. The Muslims had come to Bengal with their developed civilisation of Islam as their heritage, and they meant to settle down in the country in order to establish a new home for themselves. The carriers of this civilisation, who were mostly Turks, had themselves been uprooted from their homeland in Central Asia, and they came here as squatters to make a bid for a new career in their life. They had the backing of the missionary spirit for the spread of Islam, and their own economic necessity forced them to find an answer in the conquest and subjugation of this land and spreading their hegemony over an aging and decrepit Hindu society. They introduced the new martial vigour and the great heritage of the Islamic civilisation that they brought in their train, but how these new elements fitted into the ever-recurring humid climate of Bengal, is a long history. An attempt is made here to understand this phenomenon in the field of architecture, which expresses but one aspect of human life, but it is the most important in so far as it is a social product demanding the coordinate effort of peoples divergent in beliefs, customs and manners, often at war with one another. The human desire for durability and beauty makes them sink their differences and work hand in hand even with their enemies in order to produce a building which would serve their purpose. It is on these buildings that the human attempt at a common endeavour is writ large, and it is through the study of these buildings that we get at the back of human

mind that goaded them to build such monuments. It is through them that we shall try to see how in the changing styles of architecture the conquering Muslims advanced to adjust their mind to the environment of Bengal.

3. The fundamental difference: The adjustment had to be made between two fundamentally differing peoples—the conqueror and the conquered : the one who had drunk deep in the traditions of western Asia and the other who had rigidly followed the practices established in this sub-continent ; he who imbibed the building art from the Sassanian and Byzantian schools and the other who had learnt the ancestral craft from the occupations that the different castes had followed through the centuries; he who had been inspired by the ideals of Islam and belief in one God and the other who was wont to create new gods and goddesses and establish a personal relation with them. These differences have been emphasised by Percy Brown in the following passage :

"Of the various civilisations with which the Muhammadans came into contact in the course of their world-conquest, none could have been more diametrically opposed to their ideals than that of the people of India. Apart from the fact that the Islamic movement was of relatively recent growth, forcing itself on the ancient and firmly established social and religious structure of India, it also postulates a clashing of fundamental convictions, a conflict of realism with idealism, of the material with the visionary, of the concrete with the abstract. Nothing could illustrate more graphically the religious and racial diversity, or emphasise more decisively the principles underlying the consciousness of each community, than the contrast between their respective places of worship, as represented by the mosque on the one hand, and the temple on the other. These structures not only provide

the touchstone of the two creeds, but symbolise the innermost perceptions of the followers of each. Compared with the clarity of the mosque, the temple is an abode of mystery; the courts of the former are open to light and air, with many doorways inviting publicity, the latter encloses "a phantasma of massive darkness", having sombre passages leading to dim cells, jealously guarded and remote.. The mosque has no need of a central shrine, it is sufficient for the devotee to turn in the direction of Mecca, but the focal point of the temple is a sacred chamber often deep within the labyrinth of its endless corridors. Architecturally the mosque is wholly visible and intelligible while the temple is not infrequently introspective, complex and indeterminate. The representation of natural forms is prohibited by Islamic usage, whereas the walls of the temples pulsate with imagery, and their interiors are the dwelling places of the gods; decorative lettering attained its highest form in the sculptured texts on the Moslem places of worship, but on the temple inscriptional art is rare, the Hindus conveying their meaning by iconography and carved figure compositions. By means of a multitude of these figured forms, the Hindus gave to the temple an effect vivid and colourful, but all of it in the natural tint and texture of the stone; conversely, the Muhammadans broke up their wall surfaces in patterns of different coloured marbles, and also applied schemes of painted plaster of brilliantly glazed tiles.[1]"

4. Terminology: Yet the conquerors and the conquered compromised to create buildings which would meet the need of the day. The first of this kind served the purpose of the conquerors who desired to have a place of prayer and thanks-giving to their Lord who had given them victory. In the words of

1. Percy Brown, *Indian architecture* (The Islamic Period), 2nd ed., p. 1.

Minhaj, "After Muhammad-i-Bakht-yar possessed himself of that territory (Rae Lakhmaniah's), he left the city of Nudiah in desolation, and the place which is now Lakhnawati he made the seat of government. He brought the different parts of that territory under his sway, and instituted therein, in every part, the reading of the Khutbah, and the coining of money; and through his praiseworthy endeavours, and those of his Amirs, masjids, colleges, and monasteries (for Darweshas), were founded in those parts[1]." From that day onwards the Muslims in Bengal erected buildings with the help of the local masons and materials but suited to their own particular ideals. All architecture is an expression of ideals suited to socio-religious needs of man. The religion of Islam provided such an ideal to its followers and that alone governed their life in all its sphere. The buildings that were, or are, erected for its purpose or under its influence in any part of the Islamic world, bear its true stamp. These buildings are not governed by any canon of laws to be found in the holy Qur'an, but they follow a tradition of building art which the Muslims have developed in course of time. This common building art is a heritage of the Muslims all over the world, and hence we call it Muslim architecture. The term 'Islamic' conveys rigidity of ideas dictated by religion, which is not the case, and hence it is unsuitable. The term 'Saracenic', which was long applied to this architecture is also not suitable because it is not the product of the Saracens alone[2].

5. Source: The terminology, adopted here, explains fully the course of the cultural development

1. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Eng. Tr., p.557.
2. Saracens mean nothing more than the Arab tribsmen who dwelt along the borders of the Syrian desert. See *Cambridge History of India* Vol. III, p.568, f.n.1.

in Islam. The religion of Muhammad, as born in the desert of Arabia, gave to the Muslim world its common bonds of culture and art. But in the development of civilisation that followed there was no break with the past nor was there any death-knell to the progress so far achieved. Civilisation never dies. It changes its form and name in accordance with the ideals and the people it serves. Arabia gave the religion but she had no architecture of her own to suit the expanding needs of the conquering Muslims. The necessity must be met with, and the source is well known. "The followers of the Prophet found themselves heirs by blood as well as by the right of conquest to the arts and learning not only of the vast Sassanian Empire but of the greater part of the Graeco-Roman Orient as well as Northern Africa and Spain. Under the sway of the Muslims the cultural development of all these countries received a powerful stimulus, and, thanks to the freer intercourse and increasingly closer ties established between them, Islam was able to evolve for itself a new culture, which rapidly became common to the whole Muslim Empire, and at the same time to elaborate novel forms of architecture especially adapted to its religious and social needs[1]."

6. Character of Bengali architecture: By the close of the twelfth century A.D., when the Muslims established their power permanently in this sub-continent, they already possessed a highly developed architecture of their own. There are certain elements which have become specially associated with this architecture. Fundamentally speaking, they are arch and dome, minarets and mihrabs. These elements are common throughout the Muslim world. But, besides these, there

1. *Camb-idge History of India*, Vol. III, p. 569.

are number of local elements that get upperhand in different regions and localities. These differences make for local styles. They bear the character of the land upon which they flourish. The Muslim architecture that developed in Bengal, had an individuality of its own, and it bears a definite stamp of this deltaic land. In contrast to the green and gold mosaics of Jerusalem and Damascus, or the superb colouring of Persian tilework, or the wonderful fantasies of Spanish design, Bengal offers her marvellous art designs in terracotta that take their inspiration from the jungle scenes of this land. And this individuality justifies our study of this local Muslim architecture in Bengal.

CHAPTER II

THE BENGALI STYLE OF MUSLIM ARCHITECTURE

1. The New Approach: The Bengali Muslim architecture has been very inadequately studied in the past. Fergusson[1] gives it a place in his classification of the Indo-Muslim architecture as one of the thirteen styles. But he deals with only a few monuments of Gaur and Pandua. Havell[2] takes these monuments into account only to prove his thesis of the "Indianness" of the Indo-Islamic architecture. Marshall[3] devotes a section on Bengal and analyses the nature of the pre-Mughal monuments. Percy Brown[4] follows in their foot-steps and includes Bengal as one of the provincial styles but deals with monuments falling between cerca 1300 and 1550. In all these works the method is to give priority to the imperial style of Delhi and Agra, while the provincial monuments are just to supply the varieties to the enrichment of the Indo-Muslim architecture. But however great may be the common bonds of all-India culture, the regional traditions are deeply rooted in local history, geography and a long succesion of accumulated experience. These traditions form individual units by themselves, and they express the aspirations of a group of people faced with a common problem of life. When these combine to make the larger whole, the individuality is never sacrificed. It is the realisation of a wider and happier cultural sphere that

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1. *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Vol. II, London, 1910, p.189.
2. *Indian Architecture*, 2nd ed., 1927, Pp.54-60 and 121-33.
3. *Cambridge History* of *India*, Vol. III, Pp.599-608.
4. *Indian Architecture* (*The Islamic Period*), Ch. VII.

knits the regional units into a common bond of human activity. When we look from the top, we hardly get at the striving of man who attempted to create a human edifice against the torrential rain and the luxuriant jungle running riot. If architecture is an expression of human will in brick and mortar to create something sublime—some thing to express his distinctive genius on the convass of nature which is ever ready to merge him within her lap—it is necessary that the architectural forms are studied and styles appreciated against the demand of local conditions. The motives of man are understood only when he is appreciated in the particular surrounding in which he is placed. The buildings are not end-products in vacuum. They are created to meet certain conditions of life, and it is in the fulfilment of these conditions that the highest achievement of man is realised. It will be our endeavour to visualise the particular conditions that drove man to look for one or the other form and trace the integration of these forms into one or the other style within the means available to him. The method will be to select the monuments of different periods, to analyse them into their constituting elements and trace the evolution of a style or styles that emerge in the course of centuries. The result will not be a finished monograph on the monuments of one particular place, as Creighton[1], Ravenshaw[2] and Abid Ali[3] have done, nor even the reduction of the buildings into a scheme of geometric plan to see their inter-connection, as has been done by M.M. Chakravarti[4]

1. *Ruins of Gaur*, London, 1817.
2. *Gaur, Its Ruins and Inscriptions*, London, 1878.
3. *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, ed. by H.E. Stapleton, Calcutta, 1931.
4. 'Pre-Mughal mosques of Bengal', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1910, Pp.23-33.

and S. K. Sarasvati[1], but an appraisal of the evolutionary processes that condition the creation of buildings in the context of local geography, traditions, and foreign influences that are received from time to time. Our attempt here is not simply to describe the monuments, or to reduce them to mere geometric forms, but to build up a story of human endeavour for search after architectural expression within a given circumstance, and to see through these expressions the evolution of a style peculiar to Bengal.

2. Building Material: The easily available material in Bengal is the alluvial clay of a very fine texture, which has been used from time immemorial for house building, and moulded terracotta for purposes of decoration. The only stone at hand is the black basalt from the Rajmahal hills in Malda district. Very rarely sandstone and granite were imported from Bihar. It is the brick masonry which dominates in the building art of Bengal, the stone serving as the secondary material, and it is precisely for this reason that the Bengali architecture has been aptly described as illustrating the "brick style[2]". The quality of the stone was well understood by the local architects who, recognising its strength, profusely turned them into pillars to be used as supports for the arches and domes. But more often stone slabs were used as the outer facing of the walls, the inner core of which was built of brick. This second method of construction has been termed in this book as following the 'brick-and-stone style'. The latter method is not a new invention of the Muslims in Bengal. It has been followed widely in this sub-continent and is seen as early

1. 'Indo-Muslim Architecture in Bengal', *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. IX, 1941, Pp.12-36.
2. S.K. Sarasvati, *Op. Cit.*, p.33.

as the construction of the *Qutb Minar* at Delhi by Qutbuddin Aibak. This second style is economical, and at the same time saves the surface of the walls from being affected by the atmospheric humidity so common in Bengal. Moreover, for the protection of the brick core from the ground moisture usually a stone course is added to the walls just in level with the door sill. It is difficult to say whether this method was followed in the pre-Muslim architecture in Bengal or not, as the extant examples are few and far between. However, it is the use of lime which fundamentally distiguished the brick masonry of the Muslim period from that of the pre-Muslim. Lime was known to the Hindus, and it was used by them for concreting the floor, as is evidenced from the excavations at Mahasthan, but lime as mortar is hardly known to have been used in the pre-Muslim period. In fact there is no need of such an adhesive mortar in the technique of construction followed by the Hindus. The brick or the stone masonry used by them depended entirely on its mass of strength lying flat on surface, the balance of the structure being maintained by sheer weight. Hence it was necessary to have a very smooth face and very fine joints so that one stone could easily take the entire weight of the other above. This method, technically called trabeated construction, was superseded by the Muslims who imported the tradition of building true arches, domes and vaults, in which the mortar played the dominant part in keeping together the masonry. It is the use of the mortar which ultimately led to the reduction of the size of brick so that the masonry could be more effective. Lime has also been used as a plaster, especially on the parapet, roof and dome in order to make the building water-tight. In the Mughal period plaster was widely used on the surface of the walls as well. From

the beginning of the fifteenth century A. D. we find the use of glazed tiles in Bengal. They are found both in mono colour as well as in polichrome. Some of them bear floral decorations on them. The manner in which different glazed tiles play a definite part in the design proves that they were manufactured locally.

3. Bamboo Style as the basic character: The brick style, as defined above, does not necessarily mean that the Bengali architecture derives its basic forms from brick. The brick buildings are exceptions in Bengal, being generally located in the urban areas. The large majority dwell in houses built of bamboo thatched over with dry grass. It is on this bamboo style that wooden construction has been imposed by a higher class of persons, and both these have in their turn influenced the brick style in Bengal. But the Muslims came here with a set tradition, and they imposed their method of construction on the local people. It is gradually that the Muslim architecture felt the impact of local influence, which led to the evolution of a distinctive style in Bengal. However, the Muslims had to build on the available resources, and when these are fully analysed, we begin to understand the origins of Muslim architecture in Bengal. They can be understood under three heads: (a) architectural forms, (b) architectural designs, and (c) constructional elements.

4. Architectural forms: Any visitor to Bengal can see from the train the dense bushes of bamboos that abound at every place. This natural gift of God has been rightly utilized by the people in erecting their dwelling houses. In the villages we can witness bamboo huts with curved roofs and long drawn eves. The roofs take two shapes: (i) *Chauchala* type or that having four sides, and (ii) *Dochala* type or that having two sides with gable-ends and a central curved ridge. The curve of the roof is natural

in the case of the bamboos[1] so much so that the Bengali eye became used to it. And this curvature appeals to his taste. Fergusson[2] aptly remarks: "The Bengalis introduced a new form of roof which has had a most important influence on both the Muhammadan and Hindu styles in more modern time........................ the Bengalis taking advantage of the elasticity of bamboo, universally employ in their dwellings a curvilinear form of roof, which has become so familiar to their eyes, that they consider it beautiful. It is so in fact when bamboo and thatch are the materials employed, but when translated into stone or brick architecture, its taste is more questionable. There is, however, so much that is conventional in architecture, and beauty depends to such an extent on association that strangers are hardly fair judges in a case of this sort. Be this as it may, certain it is, at all events, that after having elaborated into a feature of permanent architecture in Bengal, this curvilinear form found its way in the 17th century to Delhi, and in the 18th[3] to Lahore, and all the intermediate buildings from, say A. D. 1650, betray its presence to a greater or less extent. It is a curious illustration, of how much there is in architecture that is conventional, and how far familiarity may render that beautiful which is not so abstractedly that, while to the European eye this form always remains unpleasing to the native eye ---Hindu or Muhammadan---it is the most elegant of modern inventions." Whatever it is, this form was translated into brick during the Muslim period[4]. The *chauchala*

1. See Percy Brown, *Op. Cit.*, pl. XXIX.
2. Fergusson, *Op.* Cit. Pp. 253-54.
3. This date is wrong. We have 17th century buildings at Lahore having curved roofs and eves, e. g. *Naulakha, Sahdari* and *Begampura Mosque*.
4. We have no extant example, nor even in early painting or

type (See pl XXXVIII) is seen as early as A. D. 1459 in the *Sathgumbad Mosque* at Bagerhat in Khulna district, and the *dochala* (See pl. LVII, no. 83) from the time of Shah Jahan. The curvature of the cornice and the parapet (See pl. XVIII, no. 34) became common from the time of Jalaluddin Muhammad (A. D. 1415-1432) until it was superseded by the imperial Mughal style.

5. Architectural designs: The peculiar Bengali design that developed in course of time also takes its inspiration from the bamboo huts of Bengal. In these huts there are two important features : (i) the four corner posts of bamboo, tied together by long bamboo diagonals. It is on these posts that the main structure of the hut stands, the intervening space being screened by bamboo plaits. In the like manner the typical Bengali style that developed in the time of Jalaluddin Muhammad translates these posts into corner towers, which are given prominence, and it appears that they are holding the building together[1]. (ii) The second feature which is derived from the same source is the variation given to the wall surface by alternate recesses and off-set projections just as we find in the wood and wattle-hut. In order to emphasise the resemblance the architect also provides a continuous moulding in the middle of the wall just as we find long bamboo poles in the middle of the hut at the level of the door lintel.

6. Constructional elements: It is very difficult to say what particular element is the special contribution

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sculpture, of this style in the pre-Muslim Hindu buildings. In the Mughal period this form was adopted for temples.

1. These towers can hardly be derived from the Tughlaq towers, the purpose of which is entirely different. In Bengal the only buildings that copy the Tughlaq style are those erected by Khan Jahan in Khulna district. (See pl. XL. no. 60).

of Bengal to the Muslim architecture. Havell[1] likes to attribute the pointed arch, the mihrab and the engrailing at the arches to Bengal, but these, except the last, are so common in the Muslim world that it is difficult to be dogmatic on this point. However, the adherence to the two-centred pointed arch springing from the side pillars appears to have a natural counterpart in the bamboo original, where the tying together of two bamboos tightly produces this form. Similarly the type of barrel vaulted roof seen in the *Gunmant Mosque* and *Jami Masjid* at old Malda (See pl. LV, no. 80) at once recalls the bamboo shed so well-known in the boats of Bengal. The engrailing, as seen in the *mihrab* of the *Adina Mosque* (pl. XI), is the earliest of its kind in the Muslim architecture of this sub-continent. This feature is common in most of the buildings in Bengal. Outside Bengal it was the Delhi emperor Shah Jahan who took a fancy for it and employed in the Mughal buildings. But the most important feature of Bengal's contribution is not the addition of new elements to the Muslim architecture, but rather the adaptation of the existing Muslim elements to the taste and tradition of Bengal. It is in this gradual transformation of the foreign elements to the demands of local geography, tradition and culture that we can trace the development of a typical Bengali style— a style that has deep roots in the pre-Muslim heritage and which received a sudden technical acceleration with the coming of the Muslims but which was again thwarted by an imposition of the Imperial Mughal style and by the devastating effect of the European architecture during the British period.

7. *The pre-Muslim building tradition*: The brick style of Bengal is amply evidenced by the excavated material of the pre-Muslim period. The remains uncovered at

1. Havell, *Op. Cit.*

Mainamati, Paharpur and Mahasthan definitely speak of a pattern in which angles and facets, recesses and projections, strong corners and deep mouldings play a dominant part. Everywhere the attempt is to create a heavy architecture with utmost care to have solid foundations and massive towers. These latter features are probably dictated by local climate and soil. Whatever it is, the Muslim monuments amply bear out the indebtedness to these local traditions of old. The most conspicuous is the Hindu type of the monolithic pillars, which maintained the local form from beginning till end, except a few in the *Adina Mosque* (See pl. VIII, no. 16), which show flutings. In all other cases these pillars are facetted, and in one case at the *mihrab* in the *Bagha Mosque* (See pl. XLV, no. 69) they show off-set projections. However, a gradual modification in the detail of the pillars is noticeable in course of centuries. The earliest have been directly taken from the Hindu temples and hence show carved figures and chain-and-bell motif, but the later ones are simpler without any ornamentation. The pillars used in the *Quwwatul Islam Mosque* at Delhi are built of two or three columns placed one upon the other, and thus they gain height. In Bengal they are all monolithic and give a dwarfish appearance to the buildings. This particular concept of the pillar has also dictated the form of the corner towers, which are always octagonal, and the flanking towers at the *Dakhil Darwaza* (pl. XX. no. 38), which are twelve-sided. Even the free-standing minaret, like the *Firoza Minar* (pl. XVII, no. 33), is twelve-sided. The emphasis on sides and angles is carried even into the mihrab, which in Bengal is generally semi-octagonal (see pl. XLV, no. 69). Another feature, which survives in some of the Muslim monuments, is the addition of huge, massive piers (see pl. I, no. 2) to support the arch. But the greatest of all is the tradition of fine

brick-laying and stone-work. The use of cut-bricks with brick-red surface and smoothed stones with polished faces was an old tradition that was followed in the Muslim architecture in Bengal.

8. Terracotta decoration: This pre-Muslim tradition is amply evidenced by the terracotta decoration seen in the buildings of Bengal. This ornamentation is invariably present in the pre-Mughal buildings which do not have plaster applied to the walls. The brick-red surface of these monuments presents a pleasing appearance in the background of the surrounding greenery. On this bare brick surface is applied terracotta plaque in place of the plaster so as to variegate the effect of monotony. This fundamental change in the treatment of the surface is dictated by the heavy showers in Bengal, which can easily wash away the surface plaster or cover the entire plaster with moss that darkens the surface. With the coming of the Mughals the plaster, and, along with it, the colour were profusely used. It is only rarely (see pl. LXXIX, no. 108) that terracotta ornamentation is seen on them. It should, however, be noted that the local traditions did not die during the Mughal period. The indigenous craftsmen, who were not given opportunity to employ their terracotta art in Muslim buildings, turned to Hindu temples, and we have got existing examples of Hindu temples erected in this tradition as late as the 18th century A.D[1]. These temples also betray the influence of purely Muslim tradition in their use of true arch and cusps. This differential treatment of the surface makes

1. See e.g. *Mathurapur Deul* in Faridpur district, *An. Rep. Arch. Sur. of India*, 1930-34, pt. 1 (Delhi, 1936), p. 130. *Rajaram temple* at Khalia in the same district. *Kodla Math* in Khulna district, *An. Rep. Arch. Sur of India,* 1921-22 (Simla, 1924), p. 76. *Bangla temple* at Handiyal in Pabna district, *An. Rep. Arch. Sur. of India*, 1930-34, pt. 1 (Delhi, 1936), p. 130.

for a clear-cut chronological distinction in the monuments of Bengal, the brick and terracotta surface being the characteristic of the pre-Mughal Muslim buildings and the plastered surface that of the Mughal monuments. From a distance this ornamentation appears like a fretted work, but having no particular depth its subject is hardly clear to the naked eye. But probably in Bengal they are not to be seen from far as most of these monuments are standing in the clearance of the jungle, and it is difficult to have long views. The detail of this decoration shows how deeply indebted it is to the surrounding forest scenery, for most of the motifs are derived from the natural scenes. It is the adoption of the floral and creeper devices together with new combinations of geometrical forms, that distinguishes this art from the figure representation of the pre-Muslim period. But it is not simply the individual motif that is of particular attraction. It is the total vision of the available wall surface and the setting of the ornamentation that marvels our imagination The creation of a complete design to suit a given surface is clearly evident from the decoration seen in the *Adina Masjid* at Hazrat Pandua. Such a broad concept implies a great skill in the manufacture of the decorated bricks. One particular design spreads over hundreds of bricks, and each brick has a special place in that design. In order to make up a complete decoration it was essential that all the necessary bricks should be manufactured separately and numbered so that they can be fitted exactly in their place when erecting the building. This type of brick manufacture speaks of a very skilled craftsmanship. The most conspicuous parts where the brick designs are concentrated are the mihrabs of the mosque, the frame around the entrances, the outer cornice of the walls, the raised mouldings in the middle of the walls, the basal

ornamentation in the interior of the dome, tympanums and spandrels of the arches, and sometimes as panels in between the entrances and the facets of the octagonal towers. Besides several geometrical forms, the most conspicuous motif is the creeper device that clasps and embraces in its wild growth anything that comes on the way. Another favourite is a hanging motif originating from the chain-and-bell and developing into fantastic concept of grape branches and others of the kind.

9. Ornamentation in stone: In the pre-Muslim period the Hindu and Buddhist craftsmen produced large pieces of rectangular stone slabs and carved on them in high relief figures of different gods and goddesses. This relief work has been the most favourite artistic pursuit in Bengal. It was a hieratic art developed under state patronage. The same type of stone work continued in the Muslim period with the only change that the figure was replaced by the decorative motifs. Such rectangular slabs were in great demand for use as panel decoration on the walls. Sometimes the pillars also show ornamental bands and other conventionalised designs. A new development in the Muslim period is seen in the decoration of the mihrab stones and the carving of the door frames and the lintels, where we notice various types of floral representations. The scroll work (pl. XXXVII, no. 57), seen in the *Chhota Sona Masjid*, is quite pleasing. But very soon this stone cutter's art degenerated. In the *Kusumba Mosque* (pl. LIII, no. 78) we can hardly recognise the motifs, except the wavy lines and the combination of dots to fill the surface. A study of the detail of the stone carving clearly shows that the patterns seen in them take their origin from the terracotta ornamentation. It is an imitative art. This stone work came to an end with the coming of the Mughals. Even the stone pillars were

disposed off from their buildings. Only at the *tomb of Bibi Pari* at Dacca white marble has been used as grills, and on the walls and the sarcophagus, the latter bearing shallow carving in relief.

10. Technical tradition: The Hindu tradition of building by placing one stone upon the other in a trabeated fashion was less popular in the Muslim buildings which followed the style of the true arch, vault and dome. In the available examples it is not known how the transition took place from the Hindu to the Muslim style of construction. At Delhi the *Quwwatul Islam Mosque*, as built by Qutbuddin Aibak, clearly shows the method of transition, but here in Bengal all the early structures have disappeared. However, it is in a late building in the *tomb of Bibi Pari* at Dacca that we find the roof consisting of overlapping stones in the Hindu fashion, the ceiling showing clearly this method while the top shows a false copper dome (pl. LXII, no. 89). In other Muslim buildings we find the true arch, dome and vault. In the pre-Mughal buildings the arch is always two-centred and pointed, and spring from heavy piers (pl. I, no. 2), or stone pillars, the latter being most common. The *Adina Mosque* introduced a screen of arches (pl. VI, no. 12), directly springing from the walls, as a frontage of the mosque. The dome is usually semi-circular, and has no shoulder, and hence lacks in height. It rests on stone pillars while the phase of transition generally has corbelled pendentive. For the first time in the *Gumti Gate* (pl. XXVII, no. 46) we find the squinch appearing in Bengal. The pendentive at the corner is elaborately decorated (see pl. XXIX, no. 48---full effect has not come out as the picture is in black and white). In the pre-Mughal buildings the hall is divided into square bays with four stone pillars in each bay. If the bay is rectangular, as at *Chhota Sona Masjid* (pl. XXXVIII, no. 58), the roof assumes the

shape of the Bengali *chauchala* hut type. The Mughal buildings are clearly distinguished from those of the pre-Mughal in so far as the former have plastered walls, shouldered domes, four-centred pointed arches and horizontal parapets faced with blind merlons. The dome stands on a shoulder and hence attains height. It has no stone pillars as its support. Generally the central dome is bigger than the side ones, the reduction is obtained by different methods, clearly seen in the mosques at Dacca. The interior of the mosque is generally divided into three portions by transverse arches (see pl. LXV, no. 92), each portion being covered by a dome. In some of the buildings e. g. at the *tomb of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz* at Dacca, we also find flat arch being used. This flat arch, along with multifoil arch, is commonly met with as ornamental decoration in the late 17th century Dacca monuments.

II. Bengali type of buildings: In the absence of the earliest Muslim monuments in Bengal it is difficult to visualise the types of buildings which the Muslims must have appropriated for their own use. The earliest available example is the *tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi* (pl. III, no. 5), which presents today two square rooms open to the sky just by the side of a dried-up river, to which a flight of steps goes down. If these two rooms were original, as is surmised by R. D. Banerji, they have decidedly been occupied later by the Muslims and converted into a tomb. But the whole construction is hotchpotch. It is a make-shift arrangement in which many architectural features from the older Hindu buildings have been torn away and re-used. However, the tomb does not introduce a definite style. The main types of buildings in Bengal are dictated by local soil and climate. Such an acclimatization of the Muslim architecture decidedly took a long time, and it is not easy to trace

the whole process. One thing is clear that the heavy rains have once for all decided the type of the Bengali mosque. Here the mosques do not have open courts, the liwans, the ablution pond and the attached *minar*. The Bengali mosque is a compact building, having only the prayer chamber, with an open grassy courtyard in front and a large tank on one side. This type is preserved throughout the centuries, though rarely the orthodox style is seen, as in the *Adina Mosque* (See fig. 3), and some of the late Mughal mosques at Dacca. The Mughal mosques are fundamentally different from the pre-Mughal ones in the outer look, the setting, the decoration, and the inner arrangement. These are either single-domed or three-domed. Very rarely, as at the *Begambazar Mosque* at Dacca (pl. LXXII, no. 101), we find five domes above the roof. In the eighteenth century some of the Mughal mosques were built on a raised platform, as in the case of the *Begambazar Mosque* and the *Atishkhana Masjid*. The pre-Mughal mosques are mainly of four types (i) single-domed, (ii) single-domed with a verandah in front, (iii) multi-domed and (iv) multi-domed with a large central nave, roofed sometimes with a barrel vault as at the *Adina Mosque*, or sometimes with the *chauchala* hut roof as at the *Chhota Sona Masjid*. These types cannot be placed in a historical process of evolution, as has been done by S. K. Sarasvati. They show an adoption of a common mosque type from the then Muslim world. However, in this adoptation the mosque has become thoroughly Bengalised. The true Bengali type is a square or rectangular structure with octagonal towers at the four corners, the facade showing a curved cornice in the pre-Mughal buildings and horizontal parapet in the Mughal ones. The tombs follow the style of the single-domed mosque. But *Sikandar's tomb chamber* at Hazrat Pandua is

multi-domed. In the Mughal period the variation in the style is more common. The *tomb of Fath Khan* at Gaur initiates a style with Bengali *Dochala* hut roof. The *tomb of Shah Ni'amatullah Wali* at Gaur has a verandah on all its four sides, and similarly the *tomb of Bibi Pari at Dacca* has rooms on all the four sides of the main tomb chamber—nine in all, four on the sides and four at the corners of a central big square room. At Nauda near Rohanpur in Rajshahi district we find the only existing octagonal type of tomb in Bengal. In some of the pre-Mughal mosques we find ladies' gallery, but it is absent in the Mughal mosques. Another great influence of climate is seen in the arrangement of the entrances to the mosques. All the bays and aisles open directly through the doors, except on the *Qibla* side, thus letting fresh air into the mosques so badly needed in the humid climate of Bengal. But at the same time the doors have been deliberately kept short in order to keep off the rain. It is for this reason that many of the single-domed buildings appear like prison-houses. In the pre-Mughal buildings we hardly find large monumental gateways. The highest that has been achieved is in the *Gumti Gate* (pl. XXVII, no. 46) at Gaur. But in the Mughal period this was completely changed. The monumental gateway of the Mughal type is first seen at Gaur (pl. LXI, no. 86). In Dacca this type became common. In other Mughal buildings, like the mosques and tombs, the central doorway is always given prominence. There are only three *minars* now existing in Bengal. The *Chhota Pandua Minar* (pl. IV no. 10), the earliest of its kind, is circular in plan and tapers upwards, while each stage is reduced in dimension to the one below, thus leaving an extra space at different stages for walking round. The *Firoza Minar* (pl. XVII no. 33) at Gaur is typically of the Bengali type in its twelve-sided plan,

and also in its ornamental pattern on the wall. The third *minar at Nim-sari* (pl. LIV no. 79) near old Malda is an exact copy of the Hiran Minar at Fathpur Sikri. Large number of bridges were built by the Muslim rulers in Bengal. The one existing at Gaur is a simple bridge of five span. In Dacca all the bridges are of camber type and allow the boats with high masts to pass underneath them. The military architecture of the pre-Mughal period presents great varieties. For defensive purposes the local rivers, wide expanse of the *Dighis* (large tanks), and the flooded water during the rain were all taken advantage of. It was usual to erect a rough-and-ready mud fortification at the junction of the rivers or far into the heart of the open plain, surrounded by wide expanse of water. The description of a few siege forts, as that of Ikdala in the time of Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah as given by Shamsi Siraj Afif, enables us to get a rough idea. These forts were made impregnable by high mud-walls. In the heart of the fort was usually a place, locally called *Damdama* - a raised platform solidly built for concentration of garrison. The other type is evidenced from the fortification at Gaur, which has high mud rampart, faced on the outer side with burnt bricks and pierced at several places with embattled gates. Within this fortified city is a citadel (pl. XIX no. 37) that incorporated the royal palace, the treasury, the hall of public audience and other private buildings. The Mughals introduced two new types of forts: (i) the water forts built at the junction of rivers, as at Sonakanda, Narayanganj and Munshiganj in order to countercept the advance of the river pirates proceeding towards Dacca, and (ii) the palace fortresses, as the Lalbagh fort at Dacca, the high walls of which are just to serve as a compound wall for the temporary buildings within. There is no siege fort of the Mughal period

existing in Bengal. It seems that the local climate and soil allowed only mud forts, of which we hear so much in the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* of Mirza Nathan. Another popular type of the Mughal monument is the *Katra* building, rectangular in plan with central open courtyard surrounded by rooms. The *Bara Katra*, now existing in a dilapidated condition in Dacca, is the best of them, which gives a wide frontage to the river Buriganga.

12. *Development of the architectural style in Bengal:* The Bengali style of architecture broadly falls into two chronological phases, the pre-Mughal and the Mughal, with only two exceptions. In the Mughal period the pre-Mughal style survived longer: (i) in the Muslim buildings of the mofussil areas and (ii) in the Hindu temples. These latter buildings continued to follow the old style alongside the new influences that they received from the Imperial Mughal style. Hence stylistically we may count two sub-types: (i) the provincial Mughal style, and (ii) the temple style of the Mughal period. The pre-Mughal style shows a continuous development since the appropriation of the pre-Muslim buildings for the purposes of the conquerors. This development can be studied under the following heads:

A. The Pre-Mughal Style

(i) *The Mamluk Style,* as evidenced in the early buildings at Tribeni, Saptagram and Chhota Pandua in the Hughly district. This is the formative stage of the Bengali style in which the beginnings of new taste are dimly visualised. Owing to later restoration many of the original features have undergone changes, but enough remains to show the typical brick style and the brick-and-stone style of Bengal. The multi-domed mosques are quite popular, but we do not find here the corner towers, nor the curved roof.

On the other hand the front row of arches spring directly from huge piers - an appearance which strikes ill to the eye. But the terracotta ornamentation finds its due place at the mihrab.

(ii) *The Early Ilyas Shahi Style* is known mainly from the great *Adina Mosque* at Hazrat Pandua, though other smaller buildings are known from other places. The Adina is a new experiment in Bengal as far as its general plan and design are concerned. It called forth the best of masons, stone workers, and materials that were then available. It is a bold creation unique in its kind, and though displaying many details of the Bengali elements, it can hardly be regarded as a next stage in the development of the Bengali style. However, it set the pattern of the screen of arches as the frontage of the mosque, and established a system of decoration on stone and terracotta, which was followed in the buildings of the next period.

(iii) *The Eklakhi Style* takes its name from the *Eklakhi mausoleum* traditionally attributed to Jalaluddin Muhammad, the converted son of Raja Ganesha. This building has rightly been regarded as setting the Bengali type once for all. But it suffered from many defects, which were to be removed in the time of the later Ilyas Shahis. The Eklakhi represents the true brick style of Bengal, with massive walls, octagonal corner towers, curved parapet, terracotta ornamentation, the wall surface variegated with offsets and recesses, and above all the numerous lines of mouldings. The glazed tiles are for the first time used in this building. The interior, which makes an octagon, suffers from the technical defect in failing to provide a good base for the large dome that covers the room.

(iv) *The Later Ilyas Shahi Style* is a fully developed style of Bengal. The defects of the *Eklakhi* and the *Adina* are

here removed. The forts, the gates, the mosques, the tombs and the bridges—all depict a common style, made up by a uniform technique, concept and vision and above all an ideal suited to this climate and soil. The majestic appearance of the *Dakhil Darwaza* (pl. XX no. 38) is equally matched by the softer tone of the *Kotwali Gate* (pl. XIX no. 36), and the details of ornamentation in the *Tantipara Masjid* (pl. XXI no. 40) is as fitting as the entire design of the mosque is well balanced . To this very style belongs the *Firoza Minar*, which was actually built in the time of the succeeding Abyssinian Rule. This Gaur style of architecture spread throughout the delta of Bengal and its forms and decorations were copied in the mofussil areas with minor variations. This is the period when the Bengali architecture reached its classical phase. The adjustment of the buildings to the surrounding, the well-balanced plan, and adequate ornamentation—all produced an effect that is really charming.

(v) *The Husain Shahi Style* is a further elaboration of the ideas that had reached their maximum height in the earlier period. As the Husain Shahi rulers introduced an era of peace and prosperity, the building activity in Bengal received a further stimulus. Large number of mosques were built all over the place. At this time we find both brick style and brick-and-stone style followed side by side. The decorations reached greater height, even to the extent of becoming over-rich. Multi-coloured tiles were used profusely, and some of the domes, as the two Golden Mosques at Gaur, were gilded. But we hardly find any creative art at this time. The art generally stagnated. Only the art details became multiplied. The architecture prospered, but did not evolve any creative ideal. This tendency of over-elaboration killed the very life in art, and what we find in the next period, is

the dead stalk together with dry leaves that remain to take the place of ornamentation.

(vi) *The Khan Jahan Style* is seen in a group of buildings found in the districts of Khulna, Jessore and Bakarganj. The name originates from that of the local governor Khan Jahan, who lies buried at Bagerhat and who made this style popular in this region. The style derives its inspiration partly from the Tughlaq architecture at Delhi, as the spreading bastions at the corners prove, but in general concept it is rooted in the Bengali style of the Later Ilyas Shahi period, though here the buildings are more utilitarian as is clear from the stark plainness of the walls. No decoration, except at the mihrab, is found in these buildings. As they are in an area, where humidity is heaviest in Bengal, the outer walls present a bare appearance without any plaster or ornamental variation.

(vii) *The Popular Style in the Court of the Local Chiefs:* This term has been coined to explain the many buildings that were erected after the overthrow of the Independent Sultans of Bengal by Sher Shah Sur in A. D. 1538. Some of them were built by the provincial governors of the Suris, and others by local chiefs, who raised their heads during the unsettled condition of the early Mughal rule in Bengal. These chiefs, who are locally called *Barabhuinyas*, maintained all the royal glamour and espoused the cause of local independence. The buildings erected during their hegemony try to copy the local Bengali style in all its exuberance, but the architecture, as evidenced at the *Kusumba Mosque* (pl. LIII, no. 78) lost its life.

B. The Mughal Style

The Bengali architecture, so far evolved, had its own ideals of beauty, and created forms which were suited to the local climate and environment in this deltaic land.

These appealed to the local people, but not to the Mughal conquerors who were embued with new concepts of beauty and were wont to admire different forms of architecture, that were then developing in Delhi, Agra and Fathpur Sikri. Just as the British introduced their own styles of architecture in preference to the older forms for reasons of personal appeal, so also the Mughals, at their first suitable opportunity, discarded the local style and erected buildings in accordance with the Imperial Mughal style. Once preferred and practised by the conquerors, the style was apt to catch the popular imagination of the people. And today wherever the Mughal monuments are preserved, we notice its influence in a more or less degree. The only exception that we find is in the case of the Hindu temples, which retain the older decorative style side by side with the new elements taken from the Mughal architecture. These temples pulsate with exhuberant terracotta ornamentation. The decorations derive the subject matter from the new Vaishnava cult that was boosted with the rise of the Chaitanya movement in Bengal in the early 16th century A. D. On them are represented scenes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and stories from Krishna's life . Some of the Muslim buildings in the mofussil areas also retain the curved cornice and terracotta decorations.

The Mughal influence was greatest in the provincial metropolis, where the successive governors erected buildings for their own use. Unfortunately no Mughal emperor had the occasion to stay in Bengal and leave behind a pleasure resort of the type we see in large numbers at the Imperial Capital. The tragedy is that even one palace fortress, Lalbagh at Dacca, which was commenced in A. D. 1678 by prince Muhammad Azam, remains incomplete owing to his sudden transfer. This misfortune

only means that there are no buildings at Dacca, which can be compared in beauty, grace and strength with the monuments at Delhi and Agra. But in spite of this want Dacca became, par excellence, a Mughal town, and still retains in its ruins the old grandeur and romantic charm.

With the new Mughal monuments Dacca changed the appearance of the Bengali architecture. But the introduction of the Mughal style did not alter the building material. The red sand-stone and marble of Upper India were not available in Bengal and therefore the provincial governors had to be satisfied with Bengal bricks. The brick buildings continued to be erected but there was a fundamental change in the style. During the Mughal period the very basis of the terracotta ornamentation was destroyed by plastering the walls. It is true, new types of embellishments came in vogue. In plaster we see panels, rectangular and arched—the arches being of various kinds, flat arch, four centred stilted arch, multi-cusped arch and other decorative arches. The interior of the ceiling also shows net pattern and other foliaged designs, in some of which traces of colour have been observed. Then the Bengali hut roof types are copied in brick architecture, but the curvature of the battlements and the cornice, so tasteful to the Bengali eye, is hardly to be seen. Henceforth the parapets are horizontal, and they show blind merlons in plaster. A new innovation was the addition of pinnacles at intervals on the parapets. There was also a little alteration in the shape of the dome. No double dome is seen in Bengal. But the dome gained some height on account of the octagonal drum on which it rested, the drum being decorated with blind merlons. This is probably an imitation of the shouldered dome of the Lodi period at Delhi. The domes

are invariably crowned with lotus finials. In imitation of the Delhi monuments we also find pillared or plastered kiosks rising aloft at the corners over the towers, thus giving height, and an effect of grace, to the latter. Sometimes the kiosks are absent but the towers shoot above parapet wall and taper to a petalled bud. This conception of height is hardly borne in the pre-Mughal buildings. The tall pinnacles seen in the Qadam Rasul building (pl. XXXIII no. 52) and the *Jahaniyan Masjid* (pl. XXX no. 49) are probably additions of the Mughal period[1]. The other great change is seen at the main entrance to the building. No longer the facade presents a row of small arched openings. Instead, we find a tall projected fronton in the middle, flanked by smaller arched entrances. The fronton is bordered by ornamental slender minarets standing upon inverted jars and crowned with pinnacles. Within this fronton an arched entrance opens under a recessed alcove. This addition of the fronton adds a dignity to the facade, and at the same time the gentle curve of the alcove with its reduction of the mass gives it the effect of grace and lightness. The result has not been so well achieved in Bengal, as we see at the Imperial capital. The two-centred pointed arch of the pre-Mughal period is now replaced by four-centred stilted arch, which is sometimes cramped and hence very weak. All these features are derived from the Imperial Mughal style and assimilated in the Bengali architecture.

On the origin of these features R. D. Banerji writes: "The last two capitals of the Mughal Subah of Bengal

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1. Percy Brown in his conjectural restoration of Chhota Sona Masjid (see his plateXXIX) provides pinnacles over the corner towers, which are not to be found at all. Similarly he also wrongly places only one Bengal type of roof in the central nave of this mosque, whereas there are three in actual existence.

contain a very large number of mosques in the Deccani style of the later Muhammadan architecture. In Dacca the local people have given the name *Shaista-Khani* to this particular style. A careful examination of this style leads me to believe that the long residence of Jafar Kuli *alias* Kartalab Khan *alias* Murshid Quli Khan in the districts of the Deccan especially at Bijapur, Ahmednagar and Aurangabad influenced him and caused him to copy the early and later styles of the Deccani architecture in the mosques which he built in the last two capitals of Bengal, Dacca and Murshidabad. This style is also evident in the mosque of Shaista Khan at Dacca. The low broad arch with its cramped vussoirs is distinctly characteristic of the southern Deccani Muhammadan style, which we find in the Juma Masjid at Bijapur, the Kali Masjid at Ahmednagar and the ruined mosque at Daulatabad. This style is even more evident in the mosque of Kartalab Khan in the Dacca city and the Deccan is stamped on it by the existence of a *Vav* or stepped well of the Deccani type, which some wild freak of imagination caused Kartalab Khan to dig near his new mosque in the rain-sodden city of Dacca[1]."

The similarity in the arches is, no doubt, true but how far Murshid Quli Khan is responsible for their introduction from the Deccan is difficult to say. This kind of arch is found in Dacca right from A. D. 1640 (date of the *Idgah* building), while Murshid Quli Khan arrived here only in A. D. 1790. On the other hand the arch type is only one of the features of the Mughal style that found favour in the provincial metropolis, which began to receive influence from the Imperial Mughal style long before the arrival of Murshid Quli Khan. It is also not correct to give it the name of *Shaista Khani*, as it came in vogue not

1. *An. Rep. Arch. Sur. of India.* (Calcutta, 1927), 1924-25, p.92

after Shaista Khan, the Mughal governor (1663-1678 and 1679-1688). It can be traced in Dacca as early as A. D. 1640, and all the preserved monuments after that date show these features. Even the stepped well, built by Murshid Quli Khan can hardly be derived from the Deccan. Such wells are commonly known from Delhi and Agra.

CHAPTER III

THE MAMLUK STYLE

1. Definition: The early period of the Muslim rule in Bengal, which is associated with the Sultanate of Lakhnauti[1], was the time of the provincial governors who generally bore the title of Malik[2]. They ruled more or less in sub-ordination[3] to Delhi authority and existed entirely on their untiring zeal for war against the neighbouring rival Hindu *rajas*. They had to assert their own right in the contending ideals of the time. The seed of the Muslim rule that they had sown, had to grow lest it lost its strength and got overpowered by the mushroom growth of the petty Hindu kindgoms. A new idealism was to be born out of the clash of interests, in which the right of the new invaders was to find due recognition. The necessities of their life were to be fulfilled at the expense of others. The way of their living should find scope in the then buildings. It is but natural that this ideal is reflected in the contemporary architecture. The Mamluk period is an age of rough and ready construction in which the materials as well as features of the existing Hindu architecture were utilised to create buildings which would serve these needs. In their general pattern the buildings

1. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Engl. Trans. by Raverty, p. 548.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 548-95 and pp. 729 ff.
3. Some of the Maliks were appointed by the Delhi Sultans, like Ali Mardan, while others ventured to the east and possessed the kingdom for themselves, and still others ruled independently, like Bughra Khan and his successors. The whole period was a hectic struggle for power, which was finally settled with the foundation of the Independent Muslim Sultanate in Bengal in A. D. 1338.

proclaim the Muslim source of inspiration—an indebtedness to the common tradition which by then had already developed in Delhi. In the technique of construction they compromise with the local skill, and in the detail of the material equipment they fall back completely on the treasures of the conquered people. The buildings are an epitome of the then architectural achievements of the Bengalis placed at the service of the Muslim conquerors. This early phase of construction from the beginning of the Muslim rule to the foundation of the Independent Sultanate in Bengal (from cerca 1204 to 1338) is studied under the Mamluk style.

2. *Location*: The Lakhnauti Sultanate started with a small principality confined to North West Bengal[1]. Its early activities centred round the towns of Lakhnauti[2] (represented by the existing ruins of Gaur in Malda district), Devkot[3] (modern Bangarh near Hilli station) and Mahisantosh[4] (the Mahisun of the Persian accounts) in Rajshahi district. Later Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khalji established a frontier post at Lakhnor[5] (modern Nagor[6] in Birbhum district). Mughisuddin Yuzbak pushed the frontier still further to the south west and made Mandaran[7] in Hughly district the permanent Muslim centre. In A. D. 1298 Tribeni[8] was conquered, and, along with

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1. A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Dacca, 1959, p. 34.
2. Raverty, *Op. cit.*, p. 559.
3. *Ibid*, p. 572.
4. *Ibid*, p. 576.
5. *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1954, pp. 11-18.
6. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1935, pp. 101-2.
7. H. N. Wright, *Catalogue of the coins in the Indian Museum*, Calcutta, Vol. II, p. 146.
8. H. Blochmann 'Notes on places of historical interest

it, two other Muslim suburban towns of Satgaon and Chhota Pandua developed. Though the frontier in the east had advanced in the fourteenth century first to Sonargaon[1] and then to Sylhet[2], and in the south to Chatgaon[3], the main building activities of the Muslims in this period were confined to north and west Bengal.

3. The earliest remains: Lakhnauti was the first seat of the Muslim government in Bengal, but no early remains have yet been identified except the ruined Hindu fort[4]. At Devkot Muhammad Bakhtyar Khalji breathed his last[5] but his grave remains unknown. Minhaj[6] speaks of the tomb of Muhammad Sheran Khalji at Mahisantosh, but the tomb is now unrecognisable in the scattered ruins of the place[7]. Out of the many public works carried out in the time of Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khalji[8], the only one that has been traced now is the raised causeway[9] connecting Devkot to Lakhnor via Lakhnauti. Such high embankments in the flooded area of Bengal have served the purpose of communication line.

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in the district of Hughly', in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1870. pp. 109-25.

1. H. N. Wright, *Op. cit.*, p. 147.
2. A.H. Dani, *Bibliography of the Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal*, published as an appendix to *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Vol. II, 1957, p.7, no. 9.
3. *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, ed. by J. N. Sarkar, Dacca, 1948, p. 129.
4. M. M. Chakravarti, 'Notes on Gaur and other old places in Bengal', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1909, p. 200.
5. Raverty, *Op. cit.* p. 572.
6. *Ibid* p. 576.
7. One stone mihrab from this place is in the Rajshahi Museum.
8. Raverty *Op. Cit.*
9. Cunningham *Archaeological Survey Report* Vol. XV. p. 44.

4. Garh-Mandaran: Mandaran was the scene of a long-drawn struggle between the Muslim rulers of Bengal and the Hindu kings of Orissa[1]. Amidst its scattered ruins the fort[2] and the *dargah of Shah Ismail Ghazi*[3] speak of the Muslim dominance over this region. The story of Ismail Ghazi refers to the time of Ruknuddin Barbak Shah (A. D. 1459-74), and the remains of the fort illustrate a type of military architecture that was in vogue in Bengal. The fortified area falls into two parts—the northern one called *Garh Mandaran* and the southern one known as *Bhitargarh* (inner citadel). In the words of Col. D. G. Crawford, "An earthen ramp, some ten to fifteen feet high, encloses a space of about 500 yards square, roughly quadrangular with the corners rounded off. The river Amudvara (Amodar or Damodar) enters this place at the northern corner of the ramp and flows across it, passing out at a gap in the eastern side, near its south end. The south eastern corner of the quadrangle shows a distinct bulge outwards to the south-east, the reason for which is not apparent. On the right or south-west bank of the river stand the ruins of the 'inner fort' or Bhitargarh. These ruins consist of a mound some 200 yards square, and I should think 30 to 40 feet high in the centre. More or less all round this mound, but specially on the northern and southern faces, may be seen traces of a wall, built of laterite blocks below, brick above ....From the southern end of the outer ramp projects a second fortification, about 300 yards long from the south to north and 500 broad, with a high mound

1. *History of Bengal* Vol. II ed. by J. N, Sarkar, Dacca, 1948, pp. 52, 133, 143-44.
2. Col D. G. Crawford, 'Places of historical interest in Hughli district' in *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. II, pp. 294-97.
3. *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1870. pp.117-20.

at its south-west angle; this mound consists mostly of masses of roughly cut laterite and must have been a strong bastion. The situation is well chosen for defence against an enemy armed only with bows and arrows or even early fire arms. Even if the outer ramp were taken, the garrison of the inner fort were sure of a water supply from a river. ....A little north of the northern ramp lie the ruins of Garh Mandaran. These consist of large mounds, 15 to 20 feet high, covering a space of about half a mile square."

5. Tribeni and the neighbouring places: The township of Tribeni, Satgaon and Chhota Pandua belong to a single phase of the Muslim history and deserve to be treated together. Of the the three, Tribeni is the most important from the Hindu religious point of view, as it marked the sacred spot where the three rivers—the Ganges (i. e. the Bhagirathi),the Jamuna and the Sarasvati joined together[1]. The Hindus came here in large number for the holy bath[2]. It is this occasional assembling of the Hindus at this spot that must have attracted the attention of the Muslims. Moreover Tribeni lay on an important river highway along the Bhagirathi which flowed from the Muslim capital at Lakhnauti. The occupation of this place would give a direct line of communication from the capital city into the heart of south Bengal, and would further open a traffic direct into the sea. It is this last position that the port of Satgaon[3] occupied during the Muslim rule, and

1. This junction of the three rivers is actually *Muktaveni*, i. e. the point where the three rivers diverge, and thus it is in contrast to the junction at Prayag near Allahabad. See L. S. S. O' Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers*, *Hughly* Calcutta, 1912, p. 254.
2. H. A. R. Gibb, *Ibn Battuta*, London, 1929, p. 267.
3. R. D. Banerji, 'Saptagrama or Satgawn', in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1909, pp. 245-62.

usurped the title of ancient Tamralipti (modern Tamluk in Midnapur district). The conquest of this region is attributed to two personalities, one of them being the well-known military commander Zafar Khan Ghazi[1] (A. D. 1298-1313) and the other a Muslim saint, Shah Safiuddin. The local tradition about Zafar Khan is given by D. Money[2], and about the Shah by H. Blochmann[3]. There is no doubt both are related to the same series of events, and whether Shah Safi was a friend or a nephew of Zafar Khan, as is described by Blochmann, or a nephew of Sultan Shamsuddin Firoz Shah of Bengal, as is argued by Dr. A. Karim, he is the important saint responsible for the spread of Islam in this region, and also the founder of the Qazi families in Pandua[4].

6. The architectural style: It is only in these three places that the earliest Muslim monuments of Bengal are preserved. Though they are in ruins, and some of them have been much altered in the subsequent period, still they have enough to tell us about the architectural activities in Bengal in the late 13th and early 14th centuries A.D. The monuments speak alike of the Hindu stone craftsmanship and of the Muslim adaptation of the older materials for their own use. The beautifully carved Hindu pillars and the detail of the sculptures in relief (pl. II, no. 4 and pl. III, no. 6) indicate the dexterity in hand, which must have produced the canopied pulpit (pl.. IV, no. 9). The laying of the rectangular-cut stones one upon the other

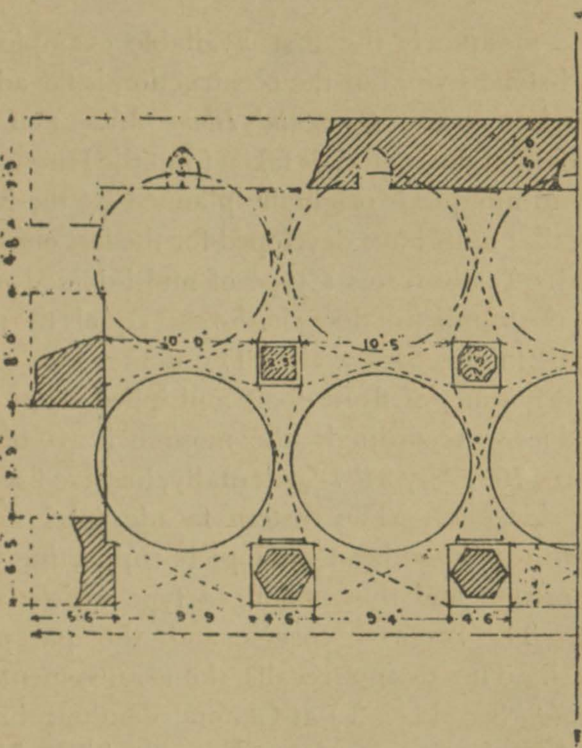
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1. See *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, Vol. IV, 1956 pp. 198-202.
2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1847, pp. 393-401.
3. *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1870, pp. 121-25; see also A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Dacca, 1959, pp. 116-17.
4. L. S. S. O' Malley, Op. Cit,. p. 297.

without mortar, as is seen in the tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi (pl. III, no. 5) is a traditional Indian practice. But the new style of the Muslim period is evidenced by a mixture of brick-and-stone construction, in which the stone is used[1] as a veneer to conceal the brick-work of the core, as is the case in the walls, but the roof is entirely built of brick laid in lime mortar. This brick-and-stone style is the common mode adopted in Bengal, especially in those buildings where stone is used. The pillars are monolithic, divided into sections by raised carvings, each section showing different number of facets. The heavy piers (pl. I, nos. 1 and 2), used in the *mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi*, are constructional, and recall the thick brick piers associated with brick style. Another example of this kind is seen in the *Qadam Rasul* building at Gaur.[2]

7. The Mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi: The earliest building dated[3] in 698/1298 is the *mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi* at Tribeni. (See Fig. 1) But the mosque was renovated number of times[4]. It is difficult to be certain of the original portion that was built by Zafar Khan. While M. M. Chakravarti[5] unhesitatingly takes the whole building to be original, Mr. S. K. Sarasvati[6] refers the present design of the building to the later part of the 15th century A. D. on the ground that it is of multi-domed oblong type. While the restorer's hand is definitely marked in the high

1. See ante p. 8.
2. See Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)*, pl. XXVII, Fig. 1.
3. See A. H. Dani, *Bibliography of the Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal*, p. 6, no. 7.
4. See *Ibid.*, p. 118 for other Tribeni inscriptions.
5. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1910, pp. 23-24.
6. *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. IX, 1941, pp. 14-15 ; see also Percy Brown *Op. Cit.*, p. 34, and *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. III, p. 601.



Half-plan
Figure 1.

dome, the assembled ornamental pieces in the mihrab and the dressed arches, it will be too much if we attribute the entire structure to a later period. If we are to judge from a later Muslim practice, the original plan is hardly altered by the restorer, though he may make additions. Such later additions are clearly marked in the buildings at Dacca (See pl. LXXIV, no. 103).

The mosque is the first available example of the brick-and-stone style, but the construction is far advanced in comparison to the *Quwwatul Islam Mosque* at Delhi[1]. Though built of the materials taken from the Hindu temples the Tribeni mosque is originally planned by the Muslims in a style that must have developed for the last one century in Bengal. It illustrates a type of multi-domed mosque, in which the number of doors in the east equals the number of mihrabs in the back wall. The domes over the roof equal the number of front doors multiplied by the doors on the sides. Accordingly the mosque has ten domes. It measures 76' 9" by 34' 7" externally, has five front doors and two side ones. The eastern facade (pl. I, no. 1) is unique with its huge hexagonal piers supporting the five pointed arches, and thus making a type which is rather uncouth. The restored cornice and the parapet are horizontal. The design recalls the arrangement of the *Bari Masjid* (See Fig. 2) at Chhota Pandua, but there the facade is unfortunately fallen off. The side aisles of *Zafar Khan's mosque* (pl. I, no. 2) gives an impressive view with its long vista of successive arches. The interior of the mosque is divided into ten spaces by equal disposition of the stone pillars, on which rest the arches. The circular base of the dome rests on these arches and the

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1. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, no. 22, 'A Historical Memoir on the Qutb : Delhi' by J. A. Page, Calcutta, 1926.

corbelled pendentives at the corners. These pendentives are very clear in the *Bari Masjid* (see pl. IV, no. 8). The mihrab wall is usually plain, though just near the central mihrab the decorative bricks (pl. II, no. 3) give the first example of the floral style that appealed to the Muslims in Bengal. The decoration is distributed into different rectangular panels except for one deep niche in the middle. The niches contain a multifoil arch, supported on variegated stone pillars. Within the panel is a swinging creeper with evergreen leaves—a motive which is peculiar to Bengal. Such a natural flow in the decorative art is hardly seen in the subsequent period. On the whole the building represents a type of Muslim mosque, which is adapted to the local climate and taste. The heavy rains in Bengal allow only covered prayer chamber but no open courts. The Tribeni mosque follows the Bengali style in having only the prayer chamber. No courts, no liwans, no ablution pond, and no minaret are seen here.

8. Tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi: Since D. Money wrote, it has become customary to describe this monument as a temple[1], though it is difficult to understand how the existing two square rooms standing side by side on the same plinth could have served the plan of a temple. If the stones are in the original places, it is strange that some of them are upside down. Plate II, No. 4 is a panel taken from the plinth with two rows of relief work, just opposite each other. Plate III. no. 5 is a view of the facade, showing a door opening in the centre with a rectangular shallow niche on either side. The niche

1. R. D. Banerji (see *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1909, p. 245) has misquoted Mr. D. Money, when he writes that in the latter's time was to be found "the cluster of temples in the courtyard". The description of Money applies only to the tomb and mosque of Zafar Khan.

has a trefoil arch above and three round mouldings below, but such blank niches are rare in Hindu architecture. On the other hand the plan of the building is hardly compatible with other tomb structures. The very fact that the western gateway (now closed) leads to a flight of steps, going down to the bed of a river (now dried up), suggests that the spot originally belonged to a temple, but the builders have reshuffled the materials and provided two square rooms open to the sky to accommodate some graves. The western room, where lie buried Zafar Khan and his wife, originally had four doors, one on each side. The northern door (pl. III, no. 5) is made up of a Hindu frame, consisting of three bands, each having carved figures at the bottom. The innermost band is a coil of the *Shesh Naga*, the middle one has a head decoration at the top, and the outer one is further divided by ornamental mouldings. The eastern gateway leads into the other room, which has four graves on a masonry platform. In the opinion of R. D. Banerji the western room was the *antarala* (the inner cell), and the eastern one the *mandapa* (or the assembly hall). Whatever they were, today the entire appearance is changed. It is in the eastern room that the Sanskrit inscriptions, recording the descriptive labels below the sculptures, showing scenes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, are found. Palaeographically these inscriptions can hardly be placed earlier than 12th century A. D. There are other stone sculptures fixed at the plinth on the outer face. Plate III, no. 6 depicts nine *gănas*, in the centre of which is the chief, *Ganesha*, represented iconographically. Plate II, no. 4 has a row of inscriptions in the middle, separating the two pot-bellied figures upside down from the various incarnations of *Vishnu*, each incarnation contained within a double-beaded garland oozing from the *Kirttimukha* (lion-face).

9. *Satgaon*: There is only one ruined mosque existing there. It was built by Sayyid Jamaluddin, son of Sayyid Fakhruddin of Amul in 936/1529. The mosque is oblong, covered by six domes, and built of bricks showing carved designs[1]. It has three decorated mihrabs. The style belongs to the Husain Shahi period. Outside this mosque stand three stone-built graves.

10. *Chhota Pandua*: The place is famous for the dargah of Shah Safiuddin The dargah complex stands within a brick enclosure, to which a modern gateway, which incorporates some old carved pillars, gives entrance. On one side of the compound lies the *tomb of Shah Safi*, and on the other some old mosques. The tomb (pl. III, no. 7) is a single-domed square building, with towers at the four corners and beautiful finial over the dome. The cornice and the parapet are curved[2]. The walls are plastered over, indicating that the present building is after the Mughal style. But inside the tomb the older stone pillars survive. The building shows the provincial version of the Mughal style,in which the local curved cornice is the dominant factor. The tomb compound has small turrets over the walls at the corners, each crowned by a domical *chauchala* roof of the Bengali fashion.

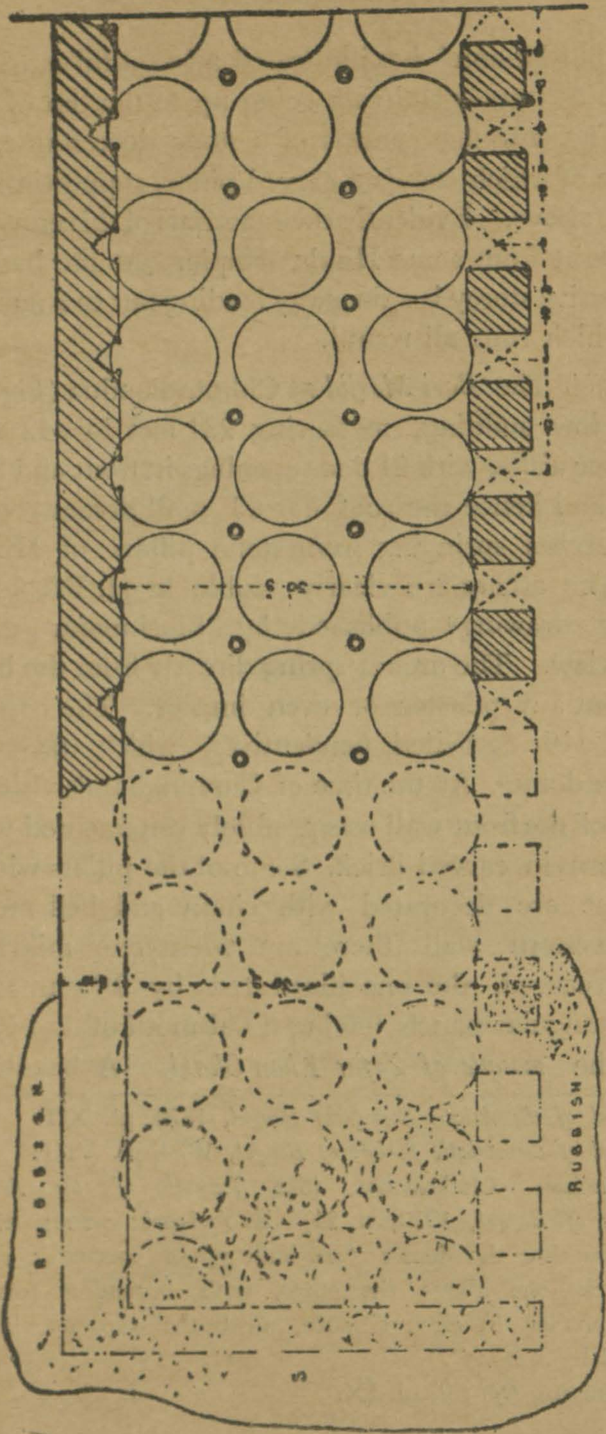
The *dargah mosque* is a single-domed square building, measuring twentyfive feet internally, with walls six feet thick. It is built of brick, but the carved decorations are mostly gone. According to an inscription[3] it was built in 882/1477, during the reign of the Bengali Sultan Yusuf Shah, by Majlis Azam. The style of the mosque

1. See *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1870, pp. 280-81.
2. See chapter II, section 4. for this feature.
3. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 124-26; A. H. Dani, *Op Cit.*, p. 30. no. 48.

belongs to the later Ilyas Shahi period. To the south of this mosque there is another ruined mosque of the Mughal time, while to the east stands a brick masonry grave.

11. The Minar: The most important building now existing at Chhota Pandua is the *minaret* (pl. IV, no. 10), 175 feet away from the *Bari Masjid.* It can hardly be taken for the *Mazina* (place for calling to prayer), as was believed by Cunningham. Its shape and size mark it out as a victory tower, and as such it must have been one of the earliest buildings erected at Chhota Pandua. But its present appearance speaks more of the restorer's hand than that of the original. As seen today, it is a plastered brick-work, with three of its lower stages showing rounded flutes. The plaster as well as the top finial may not be original. In design it is completely different from the *Qutb Minar.* Yet it is nearer to it in its general round plan. The round tower breaks into five stages or storeys, each lessening in diameter from 60 feet at the base to 15 feet at the top. The dimensions of the different stages, as taken by Cunningham, are given below :

	Diameter feet	Height feet
Upper storey	............12-0 above 15-0 below	 18
4th storey	............23-10 above 26-0 below	 18
3rd storey	............34-8 above 37-5 below	 30
2nd storey	............47-6 above 48-1 below	 25
Basement	............58-2 above 60- below	 25
		116
	Pinnacle	9
	Total	125



Half-plan
Figure 2.

H. Blochmann[1] has illustrated a beautiful entrance leading to a circular staircase going up to the top of this tower. The entrance consists of a stone door frame, on either side of which stands a carved pillar, supporting the architrave above. Evidently the materials of this entrance were brought from some Hindu temple. At the base of each successive storey is a doorway leading out to a narrow gallery, which runs all round.

12. Bari Masjid: The *Bari Masjid* at Chhota Pandua (Fig. 2) is a long low building, measuring 231 feet by 42 feet, having three aisles, with 21 door openings in front and 3 on the sides, and hence the roof has 63 small domes resting on brick arches springing from stone pillars of Hindu design. The arches are clearly visible in pl. IV, no. 8. The older drawing[2] published by Blochmann gives a better view. The arches spring directly from the back wall without any pilaster or even impost. The corners are filled with corbelled pendentives, which take the base of the dome[3]. At the time of Cunningham's visit the outer face of the front wall was profusely ornamented with small patterns in carved brick. Some of the pillars within the mosque are decorated with chain and bell motif. On the western wall there are twentyone mihrabs, all highly carved, the one illustrated by Blochmann[4] depicts rectangular panels having floral motif of the type seen in the *mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi.* A beautiful

1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1870, pl. XII.
2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1870, pl. VIII.
3. Manmohan Chakravarti (See *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1910, p. 24) is obviously wrong when he says that the domes "are built up of concentric rings of bricks, one above the other, each becoming smaller and smaller in circumference, until the top opening is closed by a stone".
4. Blochmann, *Op. Cit*, pl. IX.

conopied pulpit (pl. IV, no. 9) is also provided within the mosque. The pulpit stands on a raised platform, to which approach is given by seven steps. The step stones are all carved, and the canopy opens on three directions through a well-balanced arch. In the north-western corner of the mosque is an enclosure, popularly called *Chillahkhana* of the saint, but more appropriately it should be recognised as a ladies' gallery. Cunningham[1] compares the plan of this mosque with that of the *Fort Masjid* at Jaunpur[2], but the comparison hardly stands except that both the mosques emphasise the length and do not give due consideration to the breadth. On the other hand the *Fort Masjid* at Jaunpur, with its plan divided into three sections—the middle one having domes and side ones only pillared halls—provides the proto-type, which was later to be developed in all the mosques erected at Jaunpur during the time of the Sharqis. The *Bari Masjid* at Chhota Pandua comes closest to the *mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi* in its general oblong plan, the design of the front facade with its arches resting directly on pillars, and the interior look with long vistas of successive arches springing directly from the pillars.

13. Molla Simla Mosque: There is another old mosque in the Hughly district at Molla Simla. This mosque[3] was originally built in the time of Sikandar Shah in 777/1375, but in recent time it has been completely restored. Originally the mosque was a single-domed square building, each side measuring 24' externally, with octagonal towers at the four corners. The eastern door, with its round twin columns, betrays the modern touch. The

1. *Archaeological Survey Report*, Vol. XV, p. 124.
2. See *Ibid*, Vol. XI, pl. XXXI: and E. W. Smith, *The Sharqi Architecture of Jaunpur*, Calcutta, 1889, p. 25.
3. For photo and plan see *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1910, Fig, 3 and 4.

plastering of the walls and the four-centred arch recall the Mughal practice. But the cornice is curved and the dome is semi-circular, as we find in the pre-Mughal period. The mosque illustrates the method of adapting the old building in later times.

14. Conclusion: The detailed description of the mosques, tomb and minaret point out certain fundamental principles, which were followed in the architectural works of the Mamluk period. We have three different techniques used in these buildings. While the *tomb* is a stone structure, based probably on the original foundation of the Hindu temple, the *mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi* illustrates the brick-and-stone style, in which the inner core, made of brick-work, is concealed within a veneer of stone facing. This is true also of the huge piers that support the two-centred pointed arches. The *Bari Masjid* and the *Minaret* at Chhota Pandua exemplify the typical brick style of Bengal, though the former uses profusely stone pillars as support of the arches, and the latter has the door opening at the ground floor built entirely of stone. The tomb is a rough and ready construction, devised to perpetuate the memory of the first conqueror in a solid building of stone. The two mosques have a comparable plan, consisting only of a covered prayer chamber and thus perpetuating a type in Bengal, in which the other elements of a mosque, like the courtyard, the liwans, and the ablution pond, are absent . Both the mosques have their eastern facade characterised by arched openings, the arches springing directly from the pillars, and their upper cornice and parapet are straight. The last feature is repeated in the *Adina Mosque* (see next chapter), but is not to be found in the buildings erected subsequent to that. The *Mosque of Zafar Khan* shows an unnecessary pillar (probably modern restoration) placed at the right exterior

corner. Except for this, no corner towers are found in these mosques. Mr. S.K. Sarasvati[1] makes a fetish of the ground plan and tries to evolve it from the plan of the *Adina Masjid.* But the latter is not the first of its kind erected in Islam. The oblong covered *Zulla* has been the usual type since the day the first mosque was built in Islam. The *Quwwatul Islam Mosque* at Delhi is the the proto-type, on which the subsequent development in this sub-continent is based. The oblong plan of the mosques in Hughly district is an adaptation from this type to suit the conditions of Bengal. The interior arrangement of the pillars is peculiar to the Bengali style, which is probably derived from the concept of the pillared halls in a Hindu temple. The only new feature introduced by the Muslims is a series of arches, which spring directly from these pillars and support the hemispherical domes above. The 'phase of transition' from the square to the circular base of the dome is achieved by filling the corners with over-sailing courses of brick—a practice which long continued in Bengal. Another characteristic of Bengal is seen in the addition of the terracotta plaques for decorative purposes.

We shall see in the next chapter that these features are corroborated by the remains of the *Adina Mosque* and the tomb chamber of Sikandar Shah. Nowhere else in the subsequent centuries do we meet with buildings that are restricted to these features. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that these mosques give us a clue to the determination of a type which was prevalent in Bengal during the Mamluk period.

These mosques initiate a style of religious buildings in Bengal, which conforms in general requirement and

1. *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art,*, Vol. IX, 1941, pp. 15 ff.

pattern to the needs of an Islamic prayer, and though new exotic features, associated with the Muslim architectural tradition, have been incorporated in them, the buildings are primarily founded on local technical tradition and locally available materials. The indigenous taste for ornamentation has found due expression, and though the clumsy arches springing from unsuited pillars mar the general effect of the buildings, the interior arrangement of the pillars with long vistas right through the doorways reduces cumbersomeness and provides light and air, so much needed in this humid climate of Bengal. The buildings mark a fundamental change in the local architectural tradition in so far as the concept of space and clarity is associated in the very nature of a mosque. This sudden change is aptly announced by the victory tower at Chhota Pandua which expresses the spirit of the time.

CHAPTER IV

THE EARLY ILYAS SHAHI STYLE

1. The Character: The break-up of the Delhi Muslim empire in about the middle of the 14th century A. D. led to the establishment of regional kingdoms, but the building programme of the Tughlaqs continued unabated during the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq (A. D. 1351 -1388). It was after the invasion of Timur in A. D. 1398 that the capital city of Delhi lay exhausted and denuded of its treasures. The builders naturally dispersed into the newly-risen kingdoms, and it is only in the 15th century A. D. that the Tuhglaq influence is mainly felt in the provincial architecture. Bengal started the independent career with the revolt of Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah at Sonargaon in A. D. 1338, but it was left to Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah, a new arrival probably from the Panjab, to establish the rule of his own dynasty in this deltaic land, with capital at Hazrat Pandua[1], the Firozabad[2] of the Muslim historians. Ilyas Shah united the three regions - Lakhnauti, Satgaon and Sonargaon - under his

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1. The word *Hazrat* is used in order to distinguish this town from Chhota Pandua in Hughly district. See Abid Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, Calcutta, 1931, p. 94, f. n. 1. The capital was actually established by Alauddin Ali Shah, the cousin of Ilyas Shah, in A. D. 1338, after his revolt and assumption of independence. See *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, ed. by J. N. Sarkar, pp. 81-82.

2. This name is due to the Bengal Sultan Shamsuddin Firoz Shah (A. D. 1301-1322). See A. Karim, *Corpus of Muslim Coins in Bengal*, Dacca 1960, p. 159.

authority, and bore the significant title of Shah-i-Bangala[1]. Henceforward the nomenclature changed from the Sultanate of Lakhnauti to that of Bangala. But Ilyas had to defend his claim against the repeated attacks of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, and this heroic defence is nowhere better expressed than in the bold architectural style that developed in this period - a style that evolved from that of the Mamluk period, incorporating at the same time a sprit of the new kingdom of Islam, founded in this deltaic land of Bengal. This style gave full expression to the local genius, as it was on the support of the local people that the kingdom could stand against the imperial hands of Firoz Tughlaq. But no sooner was the imperial danger over, the dynasty of Ilyas Shah lost control over the local forces and suffered temporary eclipse in A. D. 1415 at the hands of Raja Ganesha, who installed his converted son to the throne of Bengal. In this early period of the Ilyas Shahi Dynasty the architecture of Bengal shows no influence from that of the Tughlaqs. The Early Ilyas Shahi buildings make a bold attempt to evolve a grand style befitting the dignity of the new state.

2. The surviving buildings : The Sultanate of Bangala under Ilyas Shah extended far and wide, but the monumental remains of this period are found today mainly in Hazrat Pandua. The ruins of some graves, ascribed to the rulers of this dynasty, are found at Sonargaon. Only one of them, which belongs to Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah, the grandson of Ilyas Shah, has some architectural importance. Another surviving mosque has already been described (see chapter II, section 13). The antiquity[2] of Pandua, except for the Hindu name, does not go beyond

1. See A. H. Dani, 'Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah, Shah-i-Bangala' in *Essays Presented to Sir Jadunath Sarkar*, Hoshiarpur, 1958, pp. 50-58.
2. See for general tradition, Abid Ali *Op. Cit.*, p. 94.

the time of Alauddin Ali Shah, who is traditionally credited to have built the *Astana* of Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrezi[1]. This was the nucleus which later developed into the *Bari Dargah*[2]. But of far greater importance during the Ilyas Shahi period was the family of Hazrat Nur Qutb 'Alam, whose grandfather had accompanied Ilyas Shah from Lahore to Bengal. It was this family which supplied not only ministers[3] to the court but also spiritual guide to the Sultans. The entire complex, where the graves of this family are found, is called *Chhoti Dargah*[4].

3. Date of the Adina Mosque :

By far the most important building now existing at Hazrat Pandua is the *Adina Mosque*, to which is added a tomb chamber of the builder, Sikandar Shah, the son of Ilyas Shah. According to an inscription fixed in the west wall of the mosque it was built in Rajab 776 A. H. (A. D. 1375)[5]. The traditional date A. H. 766 (A. D. 1364), given by Ghulam Husain Salim[6], is a misreading of the inscription, and no reliance can be placed on his remark:

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1. *Ibid*, pp. 20-21.
2. For description see *ibid.*, pp. 97-106.
3. See *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1952, pp. 155-56.
4. For description see Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 106-120.
5. See Shamsuddin Ahmad, *Inscriptions of Bengal*, Vol. IV, Rajshahi, 1960, pp. 35-38. Shamsuddin Ahmad reads the date as فی التار یخ ست رجب سنة سبعین و سبعما یة which is equivalent to 6th Rajab, 770 A. H. but the photograph of the inscription clearly shows ست after رجب and not before. Hence the correct reading should be فی التا ر یخ ر جب سنة ست (و) سبعین و سبعما یة which is equivalent to the month of Rajab, year 776.
6. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Eng. Tr. by A. Salam, Calcutta, 1904. pp. 105-6; See also *Khurshid -i-Jahan Numa*, quoted by Beveridge in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1895, pp. 211-13.

"Before he (Sikandar) could finish it, death overtook him, and the mosque remained half finished." Sikandar Shah lived till A. D. 1389, and there was enough time to complete the mosque. Moreover, the present remains of the mosque do not indicate incompleteness.

4. Was it originally a temple? It was J. D. Beglar[1] who undertook some excavation at the site of the Adina Mosque and for the first time opined that there was a temple at this site previous to the mosque. Sayyid Ilahi Bakhsh, the author of *Khurshid-i-Jahan Numa*, also mentions that the mosque was originally a temple[2]. But this statement is primarily based on the Hindu materials used in the mosque. S. K. Sarasvati has also misjudged when he makes the following remark in the account of one of his tours in the districts of Malda and Dinajpur: "The plinth mouldings of the mosque have striking similarities with those of the *Jangha* of a temple. Their regular construction, each in its exact place such as we find in Sikandar's chamber and in the base of the wall to the north of it, inclines the writer to endorse the opinion of Saiyad Ilahi Bakhsh, the author of the *Khurshid-i-Jahan Numa*, that on this very spot stood a Hindu temple (left unfinished perhaps on the approach of the Muslims), which Sikandar Shah decided to convert into a mosque with the materials lying ready to his hand. The bigger plan of Sikandar necessitated, however, an extension of the plinth towards the south where some irregularities in constructions occur, due probably to the ignorance of Sikandar's masons of Hindu architectural details[3]."

1. Adina Mosque in *Archaeological Survey of Bengal*, Report, 1888.
2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1895, p. 211.
3. *Ibid.*, 1932, p. 175.

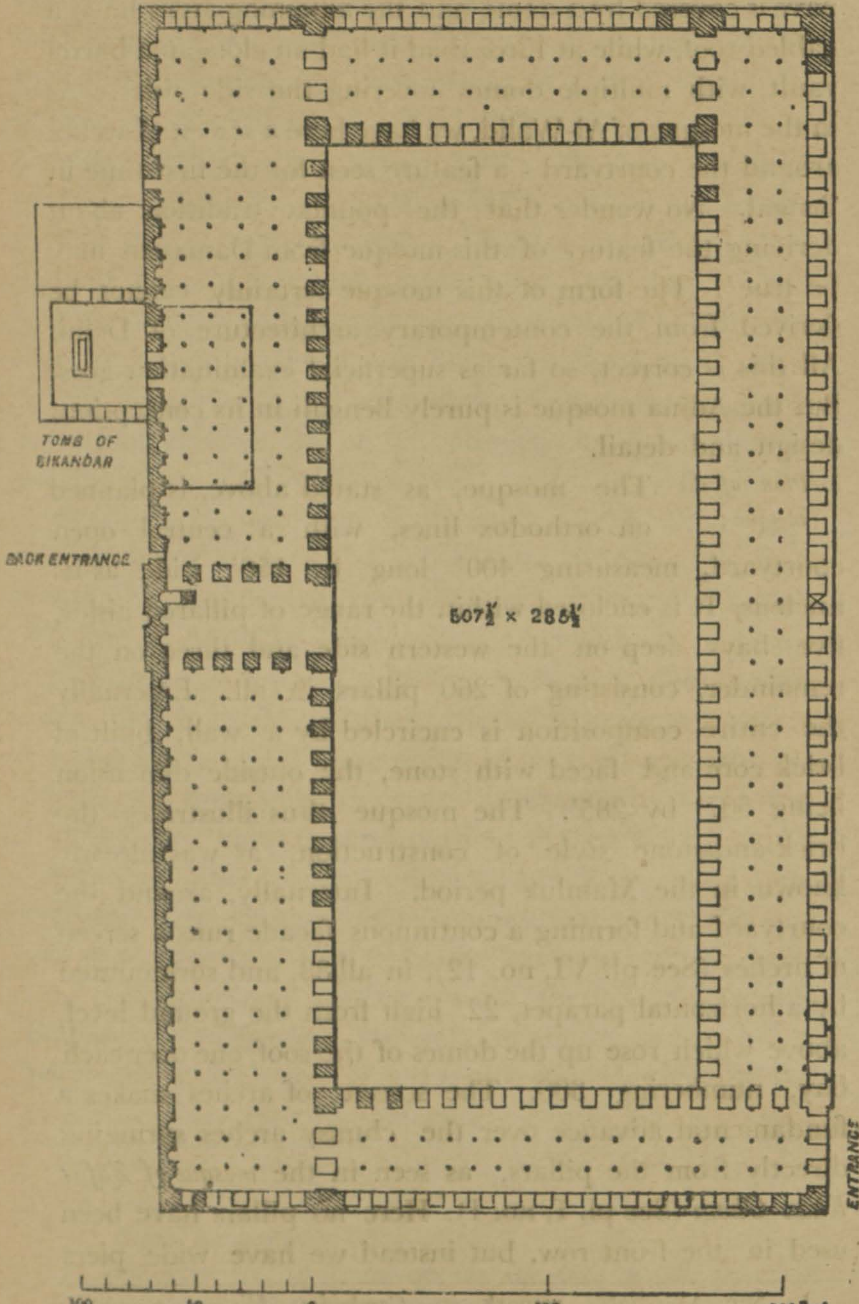
The approach of the Muslims, referred to by Sarasvati, was made years before this mosque was built, and it is strange that no other use of the materials, lying *in-situ*, could be made earlier. It is difficult to understand how Sikandar's masons, among whom Hindus were definitely larger than the Muslims, were ignorant of Hindu architectural details. The fact is that the materials have been gathered from various sources, no doubt from Hindu temples, and they have been used here most appropriately by Sikandar's craftsmen. The plinth mouldings,referred to by Sarasvati, is not a new feature in this mosque (See pl. V, no. 11). It is also seen in the earliest Muslim monument existing in Bengal (See *tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi*, pl. III, no. 5). The detailed description will show that the present plan of the mosque betrays no trace of the existence of an earlier temple at this spot.

5. *The orthodox style*: The mosque is built in the orthodox style. What is that style ? I shall here quote Ernest Tatham Richmond, "From this attempt to trace the growth of the mosque from the humble beginnings at Medina in 622, through the developments at Kufa, at Fustat, and at Jerusalem, up to the completed form of congregational mosque built at Damascus ninety years later, it appears that it took about three generations to evolve a unified and balanced architectural expression of needs. These needs were of three kinds, physical, ritual and political. The physical needs were met by the provision of a secluded area, a sheltered sanctuary, and sheltered access to it from every side; the ritual needs by the provision of towers from which to call the faithful to prayer, a basin or fountain for ablution before prayer; the political needs, by a majesty and symmetry of plan and a splendour of ornament, which would, by rivalling and, if possilbe, by surpassing the architecture of the

conquered Christian civilisation in the provinces of Byzantine Empire which had been overrun, illustrate, in a manner visible to all the high and dominant place in the world that had now been taken by the leaders and followers of Islam[1]." This completed form was for the first time achieved in the mosque erected at Damascus by the Umaiyyad Khalifa Al-Walid (A. D. 705-715). That mosque encloses a rectangular area, measuring 530' by 320'[2].

6. Adina Mosque as compared : Sikandar Shah had come out successful in his negotiations with the imperial monarch, Firoz Shah Tughlaq[3]. After this event he was free, for some time, from political troubles. During these years of peace he launched on a bold adventure to endow his capital Firozabad with a truly gigantic and magnificent mosque, "original in design and construction[4]" in Bengal, as if to match the building projects, which Firoz Shah had started in his own capital city of Delhi. The inspiration for this mosque, no doubt, came from the victory achieved by Sikandar Shah, and the design of the mosque is far in advance of the type so far built in Bengal. In actual measurement of its rectangular area (Fig. 3) it comes closer to the Al-Walid's mosque of Damascus, referred to above, and like it, the *Adina Mosque* correlates all the necessary features, excepting the ablution pond, which is missing from the courtyard. Another point of resemblance is the presence, for the first time in Bengal, of engaged corner towers (see pl. VIII, no. 15), though the height in this case does not go beyond the parapet wall. The apparent difference is that at Damsacus the central

1. *Moslem Architecture*, London, 1926, pp. 29-30.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
3. *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, ed. by J. N. Sarkar, p. 112.
4. Percy Brown, *Op. Cit.*, p. 37.


TOMB OF SIKANDAR
BACK ENTRANCE
507½′ × 285½′
ENTRANCE
100
50
0
200
300 Feet

Figer 3.

nave is covered by a dome and the adjoining aisles have a gabled roof, while at Firozabad it had an elongated barrel vault, with multiple domes covering the side aisles. As in the mosque of Al-Walid, we have here a screen of arches around the courtyard - a feature seen for the first time in Bengal. No wonder that the popular tradition about deriving the feature of this mosque from Damascus may be true[1]. The form of this mosque certainly cannot be derived from the contemporary architecture of Delhi. All this is correct, so far as superficial examination goes. But the Adina mosque is purely Bengali in its conception, design and detail.

7. Plan of the mosque: The mosque, as stated above, is planned on orthodox lines, with a central open courtyard, measuring 400' long by 150' wide as its nucleus. It is enclosed within the range of pillared aisles, five bays deep on the western side and three on the remainder, consisting of 260 pillars in all. Externally the entire composition is encircled by a wall, built of brick core and faced with stone, the outside dimension being 507' by 285'. The mosque thus illustrates the brick-and-stone style of construction, as was already known in the Mamluk period. Internally, around the courtyard and forming a continuous facade runs a screen of arches (See pl. VI, no. 12), in all 88, and surmounted by a horizontal parapet, 22' high from the ground level, above which rose up the domes of the roof, one over each bay, numbering 306. The screen of arches makes a fundamental advance over the clumsy arches springing directly from the pillars, as seen in the *mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi* (See pl. I, no. 1). Here no pillars have been used in the front row, but instead we have wide piers

1. See Marshall's remark in *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. III, p. 602.

forming an inseparable element of the long front wall. It is from these piers that the front row arches spring, thus giving rise to a system of arched facade in Bengal, as opposed to pillar-and-arch construction of the previous period. In order to enter the vast enclosure of the mosque only three insignificant bays at the south-eastern corner were left open. They served the purpose of entrance. There are three more doorways in the western wall towards its nortnern end, two of which lead into an upper platform (see further). The western side, being the main prayer chamber, has received special attention. Besides the usual mihrabs, one in each bay, a central nave (pl. VII, no. 13), which was originally covered by an elongated barrel vault, divides the longitudinal aisles into two equal halves. In this nave is a mihrab at the centre, and another one to its right (pl. XI, nos. 21 and 22). To its left is a canopied pulpit (pl. VIII, no. 14). Beyond this nave, towards the north, after three bays begins the platform of the second storey, commonly known as the *Badshah ka takht.* It occupies six[1] bays in the three back aisles, and is covered by 15 domes.

8. Defect in the Plan: This general outline of the mosque will, no doubt, disappoint[2] those who are used to appreciate grand symmetrical buildings in the sub-continent. But here we have to keep in mind the circumstances under which Sikandar Shah was building this mosque. He had, no doubt, in his mind a bold conception of a mosque to be planned in the orthodox line, but his conception was much ahead

1. Abid Ali has mistakenly given as 'five'. See his *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 134. Cf. Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey Report*, Vol. XV, p. 93.
2. See remarks by Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 90; Marshall in *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. III, pp. 602-3; Percy Brown, *Op. Cit.*, p. 34.

of his time, and beyond the power of his craftsmen to translate in architecture. Bengali masons were then used to build mosques of the type described in the Mamluk period. And therefore they could easily erect rows of cloisters around a central courtyard. But they had no experience at all in building a grand gateway, which, if placed in the centre of the eastern side, could have balanced the central nave of the western wing[1]. Even the vaulted central nave of the west, though affording the much-needed variety, seems to be dwarfed by the extra-ordinary length of the aisles. Anyway it was not possible for craftsmen to add to its height because thay were ignorant of building tall shouldered domes. Thus this grand mosque of bold conception is architecturally a failure. This failure should be attributed to two causes; firstly, the Bengali masons, who were moslty Hindus, were not experienced in erecting building on such a grand scale, and secondly, the orthodox plan was not at all suitable to the soil and climate of Bengal. No more, therefore, do we hear of any mosque in Bengal, built in this orthodox plan. *Adina Mosque* was the first and last of its kind.

The architectural features of the *Adina mosque*, when considered as a whole, have no appeal except for their grand scale. Percy Brown rightly observes, "To the spectator standing within the expansive quadrangular courtyard of the Adina Masjid, surrounded by its seemingly endless array of archways, many of them fallen,

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1. At Paharpur in Rajshahi district a Buddhist monastery in a grand scale has been excavated. It shows minute observance of the rule of symmetry, and has prominent gateways. See *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, no. 55. It seems that this old tradition was lost soon after the Muslim invasion.

the conception as a whole presents the appearance of the forum of some ancient classical city rather than a self-contained Muslim house of prayer, with the high vaulted sanctuary on the western side simulating an imperial approach in the form of a majestic triumphal archway[1]." But when different features are considered separately by themselves, they will be found to be masterpieces of art. Even Sir John Marshall had to admit, "Considered by themselves, the several parts and the details are admirable enough: arcaded aisles, for instance, are dignified: the vaulted *liwan* is well proportioned and pleasing and the mihrab is as exquisite a piece of carving as can be found in India[2]." The detailed ornamentation affords finest examples of stone carving, and shows the great excellence that the master craftsmen of Bengal were capable of achieving in stone. The traditional folk art of terracotta decoration also finds expression in the high tympanums of arches above the mihrabs. All these deserve closer study.

9. Central Nave: The nave forms a long rectangle, measuring 64' by 33'. Its frontal archway together with the ornamental parapet and the elongated ribbed vault[3] have all disappeared, leaving a wide open gap and thus bringing into full view the decorations on the wesren wall. The nave opens out towards north and south into five tall pointed arches leading to the aisles, and through them their endless length and the diminishing perspective of their pillars may be viewed. The arrangement in this nave (pl. VII, no. 13) is very pleasing. The

1. Percy Brown, *Op. Cit.*, p. 34.
2. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. III, p. 602.
3. This kind of vault is preserved at the Gunmant Masjid, Gaur, and at the Jami Masjid, Old Malda, see pl. LV no 80.

greatest attention has been given to the mihrab wall. The central mihrab (pl. XI, no. 21) attracts the eye first. It consists of a hollow niche, opening under an engrailed arch, the whole outer surface being carved with a scroll work, a rosette on either side of the arch and a triforium over the apex. Within the niche the surface is divided into four rows of panels horizontally and five vertically, in all twenty panels, each having an engrailed arch with a rosette at the spandrel and a lamp hanging from a single chain falling down from the key point. This chain and lamp may be a development from the Hindu motif of chain-and-bell, seen in so many carved pillars. Above the rows of panels are seen two friezes, the lower one depicting a series of tree-of-life within beaded necklaces[1], and the upper one having ornamented merlons. This entire pattern is separated by a rope design from the decoration seen in the half-dome, where also we find separate panels showing interlaced scroll work. Upon this decorated niche is placed an outer trefoil arch, springing from the side pillars. The base of the pillar consists of a vase with overflowing leaves - a typical Hindu motif. The tapering shaft is facetted and is further decorated with a band of ornamentation towards the top. The capital has a cross bracket. The arch is a copy of the *Hansa-torana*[2], the goose being still recognisable behind the floral ornamentation, while the apex has a peculiar winged

1. Compare pl. II, no. 4, where this motif occurs, with the difference that there the tree-of-life is replaced by a deity.
2. So very common in pre-Muslim Bengal, now surviving in a few sculptural representation. See N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of the Hindu and Buddhist Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, Dacca 1929, pl. VII, a, pl. XXXIX a, and pl. LXIII.

motif evolved from the *Kirttimukha* (lion-face) design, usually seen at this place. The attempt is a very intelligent borrowing from the pre-Muslim art of Bengal, and speaks highly of the local genius which could adapt to the needs of the new circumstance. At the spandrels of the arch can be seen a protruding knob. This whole complex is enclosed within a rectangular frame, every inch of which is carved with one or the other design. Above this frame are seen tiers of moulding, showing beautiful calligraphic specimen alternating with floral decoration. The top is broken into three sets, the side ones with a half-triangle and the centre with a full triangle—all making a floreate motif (see pl. XII, no. 24). The crowing element in this central ornamentation consists of an inter-locking pattern (pl. XII, no. 23), which on analysis, reveals a pedestalled vase with a palmette in the heart, giving rise to a scroll work on either side and also a falling leaf design - the whole displaying a noble conception wrought with a delicate hand. Still above this is an arched window. On the left of this central mihrab is another mihrab (pl. XI, no. 22), less complicated in design but full of surface decoration. The trefoil arch of the *Hansa-torana* type is missing in this mihrab, but the side pillars are highly carved, and within the niche we find one long chain with a lamp in the centre, besides the usual smaller panel decorations. On the right of the central mihrab is a pulpit (pl. VIII, no. 14), from which the *Imam* preached to the people. It is a canopied square chamber placed at some height, and the ascent to it is provided by a flight of stone steps. All the steps show geometrical patterns carved on them, except one which is an old stone, still preserving the lion-face[1]. The chamber

1. Abid Ali mistakenly takes it for "a part of the throne of a Hindu king". See *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 133.

has arched openings on three sides in order to give full view to the audience sitting in front. The arches are cusped. Within the chamber we have a mihrab of smaller type, but here the hanging lamps are reduced to a solitary one, carved in the centre of the mihrab, with the remaining surface filled with eight and four petalled flowers. At some height a rosette is placed over the pulpit and the side mihrab, thus keeping the balance of the decoration in the western wall.

10. Badshah ka takht : It (pl. VIII, no. 16) is an oblong platform raised on massive octagonal piers of the type met with in the *mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi* (see pl. I, no. 2). On these are placed slender fluted pillars of a type seen for the first time in Bengal. It is on these pillars that the arches, supporting the dome, rest. The platform originally consisted of flat stone block, some of which still remain. Its cornice is carved with a row of billets, topped by another row of beads. Originally this platform was screened all round. One such carved stone screen[1] can be seen at the shrine of Shah Jalal. It was most probably taken from this mosque. In the west wall of the *takht* (platform) there are three decorated mihrabs, which are again framed within inscriptional and floral designs. The entrance to this *takht* is provided only in the west wall through the tomb chamber of Sikandar Shah. One door frame (pl. IX, no. 18) of the entrance is bodily lifted from a Hindu temple and fixed here after defacing the images. This door frame is of the same type, as is seen in the *tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi* (see pl. III, no. 5), though here the carving is more elaborate. There are three lines of decorations, two of which start from a temple niche at the bottom, which had originally an image. The innermost line shows above the temple

1. See Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 98, Fig. 18.

top a *Naga deva* on either side, with the coil of the cobras going round and beautifully twisted together at the centre of the top frame. The central line shows more niches, but all now empty. The last line has a very conventionalised pot-bellied figure at the bottom. The entire composition speaks of high excellence in stone cutter's art. There are other Hindu figures hidden in one or the other corners of the mosque. Between the tomb chamber and the projection of the central mihrab there is stuck up a stone piece (pl. IX, no. 17), which depicts a *vidyadhari*, a semi-divine damsel, in a beautiful balancing pose.

The name, *Badshah ka takht*, meaning a king's throne, is a misnomer. In no mosque do we find any place reserved for the king, or for any man of high position. To make such a distinction in men will be against the religious beliefs and practices in Islam[1]. The platform answers very well to similar others found in most of the mosques of the pre-Mughal period in Bengal, where they have been correctly recognised as the ladies' gallery. It seems that the first mistake was committed by Munshi Shyam Prasad[2], who described it as *Takhtgah- - i - sang -i - nimazgah -i -Badshahan wa Shahzadgan.* After him all the later writers describe it as Badshah ka takht.

11. Terracotta decoration: As the walls of the mosque were faced with stone, there was hardly any open space available to display the terracotta art. It could find a

1. The *Maqsura*, which was introduced in the mosque of Madinah in the time of Hazrat Usman for his protection had lost its significance in this sub-continent. Its concept is entirely diffenent here. See Percy Brown *Op. Cit.*, pl. I.
2. See appendix under Adina Masjid for the description given by Munshi Shyam Prasad.

place in the only brick surface visible at the tympanums of the arches over the mihrabs (see pl. X, no. 19) in the west wall. Cunningham[1] rightly disapproves of the place chosen for this display, because when the domes were standing, these designs must have been enveloped in gloomy darkness. But Cunningham has not understood the Bengali taste for over-ornamentation. That this brick surface should remain undecorated, was unthinkable to Bengali architect. It was his overfondness for decoration and his desire to introduce folk art in this great mosque that the tympanums of the arches were reserved for it. In this terracotta art we notice the great skill displayed in moulding clay into various floral and geometrical designs according to the taste of the time. This old tradition, now well-known from the numerous terracotta plaques from the pre-Muslim remains at Paharpur, Mahasthan and Mainamati, has been kept up in all its liveliness and spirit. The arrangement of these designs in different tympanums is varied. This shows the resourcefulness of the designers in giving a different pattern to as many as twenty-eight tympanums.

The mihrab niche, which is made of stone, usually has only one pattern carved on the stone. Pl. X, no. 20 depicts a rosette, hanging from a twisted rope. On either side of the rope is a lotus stalk with the bud at the bottom - a favourite motif in Bengal, developing from the chain-and-bell original. The simplest method is seen in pl. X, no. 19, in which the mihrab is repeated in the middle, with little square panels on the sides and a floral decoration on the top, vaguely recalling the pre-Muslim *kirttimukha* (lion-face). Pl. XIII, nos. 25 and 26 both show a succession of decorative arches, the centre being occupied by a single motif. No. 25 has a tall tree with

1. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 91.

outspread branches and leaves, that fill the entire space. The idea may have been derived from the Indian conception of a *kalpa-taru* (a wish-fulfilling tree). No. 26 shows a series of outspread leaves gradually reducing as they go up - a motif obviously derived from the *Chhatravali* (a succession of umbrellas) seen over a Buddhist stupa. On either side of this motif can be seen rupturous growth of leaves, the bottom design vaguely recalls a recumbent lion. The entire conception is clearly Buddhistic in inspiration. Plate XIV, no. 27 is a purely decorative design of brick within a succession of arches. The design is arranged in eight rows, each one of them has a series of step motif facing each other. The remaining five pieces, illustrated here, all show a hanging lamp motif in the middle, surrounded by other patterns. Pl. XIV, No.28 has rows of chains within a double arch. Pl. XV, no. 29 shows a window grill pattern, formed by diagonal and cross lines. Pl. XV, no. 30 shows in the middle small panels arranged in six different rows. Each tiny panel has a cusped arch, from the apex of which hangs down a motif different from the other in the next row. The lowest has a lamp, the second has a group of three fruits, the third a rosette, the fourth a stalk with up-turned leaves, the fifth a reed basket, and the last again a fruit. Pl. XVI, nos. 31 and 32 have their middle space divided into two parts, each having different design. No. 31 shows, in the upper portion, a rhombos motif formed by oversailing bricks, and no. 32 has a series of rosettes.

12. Other decorations : The back of the west wall shows projections of the mihrabs (see pl. V, no. 11), and thus relieves the flat monotony of the wall. It has also a moulded band which divides the elevation into two halves. The upper half contains a row of rectangular panels, each carved with a conventionalised hanging motif, while

the lower portion shows three tiers of moulding in the recesses, as have been seen in the *tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi* (see pl. III, no. 5). The double cornice and the parapet in this mosque are also horizontal. Between the two cornice bands the space is filled with a row of small niches, while underneath the cornice is a continuous pattern of jaliwork. The corner tower (pl. VIII, no. 15) is engaged within the rectangular plan of the mosque, and is not attached from outside. The base is formed by a pedestalled wide-mouthed squat vase, while the shaft is divided by a soccle in the middle into two portions, each having convex flutes.

13. Conclusion : Such is the detailed description of the *Adina Masjid.* From its different features many valuable informations can be derived regarding the evolution of art and architecture of the period. The first thing to be noted is the stone carving. There is a marked difference between the new designs and the old Hindu carved pillars. The carving of the latter is deep and bold, recalling the high excellence achieved in the 11th century A.D., but thereafter there was a decline in the stone-cutter's art in Bengal. This decline is noticeable in the stone images of the Sena period. In the like manner the new designs of the *Adina Masjid* are shallower and comparatively inferior. Later in the *Kusumba mosque* we will see how this art still deteriorated into meaningless surface filling by the middle of the sixteenth century A.D. During the Mughal period the stone tradition was barely kept up, thereafter it died altogether. During the repairs of the *Chhota Sona Masjid* in 1912 no stone mason was available in Bengal, and they had to be imported from Banaras.

In the central nave of the mosque we have noticed very beautiful gently curved cusped arches. These cusps

have been generally used from this time onward, and we find them in most of the mosques. They are derived, no doubt, from the Hindu and Buddhist niches. But in Upper India we do not meet with such cusps before the time of Shah Jahan. Even in Bengal this feature deteriorated till it is revived in the Mughal buildings after Shah Jahan. Could it be that Shah Jahan took this idea of cusps from Bengal ?

The design of the mosque also speaks of many new features. In the very plan of the western side of the closisters we meet with a central nave, dividing this side into equal halves—a plan which is copied in a number of subsequent mosques. In the ladies' gallery (so-called *Badshah ka takht*) the support is given by heavy and stumpy octagonal piers. Such piers are not met with outside Bengal[1]. For the first time we also find here the corner towers, but they are contained within the rectangular plan of the mosque, and not attached from outside so as to vary the corner plan. The battlements and the cornice are still horizontal, and the system of multi-dome is followed to cover the roof of the cloisters. The projection of the mihrabs at the back of the west wall further relieves the plain surface. The decoration shows many new designs that were copied hereafter.

14. Tomb of Sikandar Shah : Munshi Shyam Prasad does not speak of this tomb at all. But Buchanan[2] in his account of the *Adina masjid* definitely locates the tomb at the place given in the plan (See Fig. 3), and Cunningham[3] follows him and remarks, "The sarcophagus is in ruins, and the inside of the vault, in which the body was deposited is now exposed." The tomb is standing

1. Percy Brown, Op. Cit., p. 37.
2. Martin, *Eastern India*, Vol.II, p.649.
3. *Op. Cit.*, pp.93—94.

on a high podium, the plinth of which is relieved with three tiers of moulding. The entrance is provided by a ramp leading to steps up to the door, which is again a Hindu stone frame taken from some temple. In plan the tomb is 42' square internally with walls 6' 8" thick, and from outside it gives an appearance of a cubical room. Inside, the space was divided into nine small squares by four stone pillars, the bases of which are still *in situ*. Each little square was originally covered by a dome resting on arches which ultimately sprang from the pillars. The king's cenotaph lay in the central square. Abid Ali[1] records, "There is a tradition amongst the local people that Sikandar was buried in this chamber after his defeat and death (at the hand of his son Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah), but unfortunately the ten-domed[2] roof fell in, and much debris collected over the tomb. When this was ultimately removed, the remains of the king's tomb was cleared away by the coolies along with the rubbish and thrown into the adjoining tank."

As regards the architectural features of the tomb it should be remembered that the oblong plan, noticed in the mosques of the Mamluk period, here changes into a square, but the system of multi-domed is followed. There are no corner towers nor is the cornice curved. Except for the variation in plan and details, there is no fundamental change in this tomb building. In the square plan the tomb is only following the plan of one of the two chambers in the *tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi* at Tribeni.

15. Tomb of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah: The first existing monument to copy the designs of the *Adina Mosque* is the *tomb of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah*, the son and successor of Sikandar Shah. This is the earliest existing Muslim

1. *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, pp.138—39.
2. 'Ten—domed' is a mistake for nine—domed.

monument in East Pakistan[1]. It stands at Mograpara on the edge of a dried up *dighi* (tank) about 100 feet to the east of the *Panch Pir Dargah* near the ruins of the mediaeval town of Sonargaon in Dacca district. The sarcophagus (pl.XXV, no. 44) consists of a single block of black basalt, forming a keeled top stone which rests on a table of the same material. According to James[2] Wise this was formerly surrounded by an enclosure of stone pillars which supported a canopy on the top. The decoration is seen today only on th eastern face. The cornice of the table has a line of billet decoration below a beaded ornament—a pattern very similar to that seen in the stone of the *Badshah ka takht* in the *Adina Mosque.* Lower down there are three panels, each showing an arched niche with a hanging lamp within. The lamps are of the same type as seen in the mihrabs of the *Adina Mosque,* but here they are held by double chain as against the single chain in the *Adina Mosque.* At the head of the tomb formerly stood a sandstone pillar, *chiragh-dan,* which carried a lamp. The style of the designs and carving bring this tomb very close in time to the *Adina Mosque.* It is very likely that Azam Shah lies buried here. Buchanan's statement[3] that he is lying buried in the *Eklakhi Mausoleum* at Hazrat Pandua is not supported by any other authority.

1. Azam Shah died in A.D. 1409. See *History of Bengal,* Vol.II, p.119.
2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* Vol. XLIII, pl. VIII and p.88.
7. Martin, *Eastern India,* Vol.II, p.49.

CHAPTER V

THE EKLAKHI STYLE

1. *Historical Background:* The forces generated by the establishment of an independent kingdom in Bengal created a rivalry[1] between the newcomers, who had accompanied Ilyas Shah and founded the Muslim Sultanate of Bangala, and the local supporters of Ilyas, who had dreamt of a regeneration of their cherished aims and ideals. The political opportunities favoured the rise of a Hindu chief, Raja Ganesha, who manipulated the circumstances to win over the throne for his own converted son Jadu-Jalaluddin and thus establish the rule of his dynasty. Ganesha infused a strong local current into the spirit of the time, but he could not change the course in favour of the Hindu rule. He met with a strong opposition in the personality of Hazrat Nur Qutb 'Alam, the great saint of Hazrat Pandua, who stood fast to the claim of Islam and ultimately won over the son of the Hindu Raja[2]. Jalaluddin became a disciple of the saint and made a happy compromise between the two contending parties. The result was the dawn of a new age, in which Muslims and Hindus alike co-operated to evolve a common cultural heritage in Bengal. On the one hand we find an encouragement given to Sanskrit[3] and Bengali[4] writers and on the other we hear of the

1. See for detail A. H. Dani, 'The House of Raja Ganesha of Bengal' in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1952, pp. 121-70.
2. See Dr. A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Dacca, 1959, pp. 130-31.
3. e. g. Raya Mukuta Brihaspati, see *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1941.
4. e. g. Krittivasa, see Sukumar Sen, *Bangla Sahityer Itihasa*, Calcutta, 1940, pp. 80 ff.

construction of the madrasahs[1]. But nowhere else is the spirit of the time better reflected than in the buildings erected at this time. The social emotions that were strirred in this period could alone conceive of a building of the type of *Eklakhi Mausoleum* at Hazrat Pandua. This mausoleum is the arch-type of this style, which defined a set design for all the subsequent buildings that were erected during the period of the Independent Sultans in Bengal. Except the *Chika building* at Gaur, which is a poor copy of this mausoleum, there is no other surviving monument of this time.

2. The Ideal : The *Eklakhi Mausoleum* establishes the 'brick style' in Bengal, in which the buildings are entirely made of brick, the walls being very thick and the surface left unplastered, to be filled in with brick designs and other terracotta decorations. The solidity of the structure is further emphasised by adding octagonal stumpy towers at the four corners of the building. It is the ideal of massive strength that is clearly embodied in this building. The strength signifies the spirit of resistance against storm and stress of local climate in which the weak bamboo huts are generally blown and tossed over by strong winds. But it is the detail of these huts which have left a permanent impress on the building. The surface treatment at once recalls the reed walls, and in the like manner the cornice and the battlements are curved to allow the rain water to run down quickly. The provision of a single small door on each side speaks of the extra caution taken to prevent the water from coming inside the room. But for the hemispherical dome that covers the roof, the building tries to represent in brick all those features that characterise a bamboo hut. With the evolution of this building the Muslim architecture

1. Dr. A. Karim, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 50-51,

in Bengal found for the time being a solution of its architectural demands, in which the local characteristics were impressed over the general Muslim pattern. It is this happy solution which symbolises the converted local dynasty of Bengal and underlies the social stirrings of the time.

3. *Eklakhi Mausoleum :* The name *Eklakhi* (meaning 'of one lakh') is due to the tradition that it cost a lakh of rupees.[1] Its fabric is of brick, occasionally interspersed with horn-blende slabs collected from older monuments, the most conspicuous material drawn from the Hindu temple being the carved stone door frame (See pl. XVIII, no. 34). There are two courses of stone slabs, one at the ground level possibly meant for a damp-proof course and the other at the level of the door lintel. In plan the mausoleum (See Fig. 4) is externally almost a square, its dimensions being 78′ 6″ by 74′ 6″, but internally it changes into an octagon of 48′ diameter. This change from the exterior square to the interior octagon is achieved by filling the entire core with brick-work. As a result the walls are 13′ thick. At the outer corners of the mausoleum we notice four octagonal towers attached to the side walls in such a way that five facets out of the eight are visible while the remaining three are integrated into the side walls. The towers are stumpy and do not extend beyond the parapet wall, but it is very likely that they were covered by cupolas. The idea of these corner towers is very likely derived from the Tughlaq architecture, but constructionally there is a fundamental difference. The Tughlaq towers are round and tapering and have no further decoration except the plaster applied to the surface, while the towers here are octagonal and do not taper at all. Several tiers of

1. Abid Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, Calcutta, 1931, p. 125.

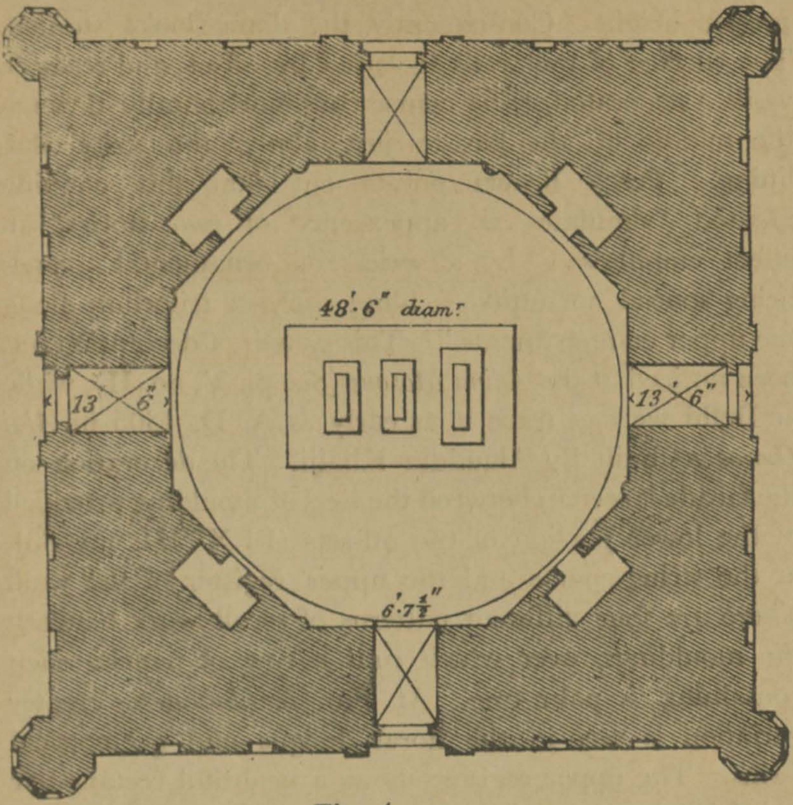


Fig 4.

moulding decorate the lower and upper portion of the tower, while its each facet has a hanging motif carved on the brick surface. Another local feature of this building is the gentle curve of the cornice and the parapet in such a fashion that the apex is reached at the middle point. There are three rows of cornice moulding, between which runs a frieze of arched panels. Just below the moulding is a continuous band of *jali* work. This ornamental effect of the cornice is further enhanced by the introduction of enamelled tiles, used for the first time in Bengal. The roof is covered by a single hemispherical dome, resting directly on the walls, there being no shoulder to give

proper height. Consequently the dome looks stunted. The surface of the walls is varied by offsets and recesses, while a decorated string course runs horizontally through the middle of the facade just above the stone slab lining. Percy Brown points out that this cunning method "simulates an appearance of two stories, an effect emphasised by a series of ornamental panels being spaced not unlike a blind story or triforium along the upper compartments."[1] This system of decoration has been noticed at the *Adina Mosque* (See pl. V, no. II), while at Delhi we can trace it as early as A. D. 1305 in *Alai Darwaza*[2] built by Alauddin Khalji. The decoration on the facade is seen in between the tiers of moulding provided in the lower portion of the off-sets (Pl.XVIII, no. 35), at the string-course and the upper register of the wall. There are four different patterns of scroll work between the mouldings, over which runs a row of panels, each containing a palm-tree. At the string-course greater variation is seen in the floral designs and geometrical forms. The upper register shows a beautiful rectangular panel in the recesses and a hanging design carved on the off-set. The panel has an arch in the middle, from the apex of which hangs down a chain carrying an unrecognisable pendant. The entrance, one on each side, makes a further variation in the facade. The construction of the entrance again recalls extraneous feature. Percy Brown rightly says, "There is an opening in the centre of each side formed of a stone doorway torn bodily from a a Hindu tempe, but with a pointed arch inserted above the lintel so that as a whole it resembles the arch and beam combination in the Firuzian buildings at Delhi."[3]

1. Percy Brown, *Op. Cit.*, p. 40.
2. *Ibid.*, pl. IX.
3. Percy Brown, *Op. Cit.*, p. 40,

The doorframe shows an empty panel on either side at the bottom and in the middle of the lintel. This entire door complex is contained within a rectangular frame, which is decorated with carved panels on the sides and has tiers of mouldings on the top surmounted by rosettes.

4. *The graves within :* The tomb chamber, as has been said before, is an octagonal hall, having no windows, light being admitted through the doorways. At each of the four corners within the thickness of the wall is a small cell. Abid Ali notes, "These were intended for the readers of the Qur'an. The blessings of Allah were generally invoked on behalf of the deceased on every completion of the reading of the whole Qur'an. It is believed that the *Hafizes* (persons who know the Qur'an by heart) were paid by the estate for such readings."[1] It is difficult to see how these dark dingy rooms were used for this purpose. The octagon of the interior is changed into a circular base for the dome by introducing squinches at the corners. The ceiling of the dome is neatly plastered and decorated with flowers and other ornaments. It is reported that painting was applied on the decorations.[2] On the floor lie three masonry graves. On the authority of *Riyaz-us-Salatin* these are attributed to the family of Jalaluddin Muhammad Shah, son of Raja Ganesha. He says, "To this day, a large tower exists over his mausoleum at Panduah. The graves of his wife and his son lie by the sides of his mausoleum."[3] It is not understood what is meant by "a large tower", - whether it refers to corner towers or the head-stone or the dome itself. There are two stone posts at the head of the graves

1. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 126.
2. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 89; *Cambridge History of India*, Vol.III, p. 603.
3. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Eng. Tr. by Abdus Salam, p. 118.

of Jalaluddin and Shamsuddin Ahmad Shah. Sayyid Ilahi Bakhsh further conjectures, "I imagine that the western tomb, which is the highest, is that of Sultan Jalal-uddin, that the one to the east is that of his son, Sultan Ahmad Shah and that the middle one is the tomb of his wife."[1] But Buchanan records another tradition. He says, "the tombs are those of Sultans Ghyashuden, Zaynulabdin and Wahuzudin. The two latter were probably sons of the first, who was the third Muhammadan king of Bengal."[2] Munshi Shyam Prasad does not speak of this tomb at all.

5. *Architectural development :* It is necessary now to recapitulate the new architectural features introduced in this building. The first striking thing in this mausoleum is its fabric of bricks. Henceforth brick architecture became the general rule in Bengal, stone-facing being very rare. The real function of the stone is confined to pillars, their bases and capitals. The second important change is the introduction of curvature in the cornice and the battlements. Percy Brown rightly attributes this feature to the soil and climate of Bengal; "The two main factors responsible for the manifest alteration in the character of the building art at this time and which account for its unmistakable appearance, are the influence of the soil on the one hand and the climate on the other, and how the ruthless inevitability of both was being realised. As to the former the nature of the country impressed itself indelibly on the inhabitants and their perceptions, it is reflected on all their activities, notably in the treatment of their buildings. It has been already postulated that one of man's prime aims in building is durability, yet in

1. Quoted in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1895, p. 211.
2. Martin, *Eastern India*, Vol. II, p. 649.

a terraqueous country like Bengal such an ideal had very definite limitations. In this deltaic region even the universe itself is inconstant, the not uncommon changing of the river beds, the frequent erosion of their banks, the silting up of water-courses and the many anxieties attendant upon the vagaries of devastating floods, all these were the experiences of the people, experiences which could not fail to have a profound influence on their outlook. In such circumstances is it to be wondered at that they affected buildings of a transient type, largely composed of wood and bamboo and so constructed they could be readily replaced or removed in times of emergency?

"The other factor was the climate of Bengal, the extreme humidity of which also conditioned the style of its buildings. To throw off the excess of water during the heavy rainy season, it was found that surface shaped to curve achieved this most satisfactorily, and the readiest way to obtain such a curve in any structure large or small was by means of bent bamboos covered with thatch. Thus a special form of curved roof was devised for the purpose and became in the course of time a fixed convention, almost all buildings of whatever material displaying this feature, or at least containing in their composition the curved cornice which represented it".[1] But curvature in the case of bamboo is natural. It is, as has been said in chapter II, not the result of any deliberate attempt. It is this bamboo style that is impressed on the brick architecture. Percy Brown also traces the off-sets and recesses of the facade to these village huts. He writes, "the facade itself is divided up into a series of projecting and recessed chases suggestive of the frame-work of a wood and wattle hut."[2] But we have already seen this variation

1. Percy Brown, *Op. Cit.*, p. 36.
2. *Ibid*, p. 37.

of the surface at the *Adina Mosque*, where it is due to the projection of the mihrabs at the back of the west wall. (See pl. V. No. 11)

The third important change in this mausoleum is the addition of octagonal towers to its four outer corners. Henceforth the corner towers became a necessary feature in any sort of structure in Bengal. At the *Adina Mosque* we have already met with corner towers (See pl. VIII, no. 15). There they are fluted and erected within the thickness of the walls. From the *Adina Mosque* is also derived the panel placed above the horizontal string course. Here the hanging lamp transforms into a floreate design (See pl. XVIII, no. 35). From the same source can be traced the decorative small niches at the cornice. The other change is the introduction of enamelled tiles. From this time onward glazed tiles have been generally used in the buildings in Bengal.

Another important change, noticeable in the *Eklakhi Mausoleum*, is in its plan. Externally it is a square while internally it makes an octagon. We have already met with square plan at the *tomb chamber* of Sikandar Shah (See chapter IV, section, 14), but there the roof is covered with multi-domes, and hence there was no difficulty in keeping the inner plan also square. On the contrary at the *Eklakhi* an attempt has been made for the first time to cover the roof with a large dome, and probably this attempt forced the Bengali architects to change the inner plan into an octagon. Only at one other monument, so-called *Chika building*, this system is followed. At Delhi we have the square plan as early as the tomb of Iltutmish (died in A. D. 1235), though its dome is not existing. Another beautiful example is the *Alai Darwaza* built in A. D. 1305. In the buildings near Satgaon, at *Sikandar's tomb* and at the *Adina Mosque*

we have seen Bengali masons erecting small domes of about ten to twelve feet all supported on stone pillars. At the *Eklakhi* they were constructing a considerably big dome of about 48′ diameter without any pillar support.[1] Probably they realised the difficulty in changing the square of the room into a circular base for the dome, and hence from the very beginning the inner hall of the mausoleum was kept octagonal. By this method their task was made easier. It remained now to change the octagon into a circular base. That they achieved by using squinches[2] at the corners. It was a very crude solution attempted by Bengali masons for building a large dome. We shall see in the next chapter how this method was refined.

Such are the features of the *Eklakhi Mausoleum*. Many of its elements are derived from other buildings and some have been introduced as a result of foreign and local influences. It also shows the great experiment of the Bengali masons in building a large sized dome without pillar support. But in no case the *Eklakhi* should be considered as "a clear break with the past" as Percy Brown[3] thinks. The mausoleum is a result, no doubt, of strong foreign and local influences, but its construction as well as its decoration, to some extent, are based on the knowledge of the masons already gained from earlier buildings.

6. *Chika Building :* Another building, which is almost a copy of the *Eklakhi Mausoleum* is the so-called "*Chika Masjid.*" In both external and internal plan, decoration, arched openings fitted with door

1. Marshall is wrong when he says that pillar supports have been used in this mausoleum. See *Cambridge History Of India*, Vol. III, p. 603.
2. For the defect in dome construction by Bengali masons, see Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 130.
3. *Op. Cit.*, p. 36.

lintels, and one large dome over the roof, it resembles exactly with the mausoleum. Even the dimensions of the two buildings are, more or less, the same :

	Inner		Width of the wall		Outer
Eklakhi tomb ...	48½′	...	13′	...	78½′ by 74½′
Chika Building...	42′	...	14′ 9½″	...	71½′ by 71½′

All these points of similarity in size and style suggest that it also served the purpose of a tomb, and its date must fall very close to that of the *Eklakhi Mausoleum.* That it was not a mosque, is absolutely certain, as on the western side there is no mihrab at all. On the contrary there is an arched opening. The name 'Chika Masjid', or "Bat's Mosque" is recorded by Mr. King,[1] probably from the fact of its being filled with these stinking birds. The purpose of the building, which resembles *Eklakhi* so much, can hardly be that of a gateway, as was wrongly attributed by Cunningham and Sarasvati[2] to Creighton. Little reliance can be placed on the tradition that it served as a state prison, where Alauddin Husain Shah confined his minister Sanatan.[3] Cunningham himself took this monument to be a tomb and assigned it to Nasiruddin Mahmud I (A. D. 1435-59). But Mahmud is a king of the next ruling dynasty, and the architecture of his period, as we shall see in the next chapter, shows

1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* 1875, p. 94.
2. See Cunningham, Op. Cit., p. 56, and Sarasvati, *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Vol.* IX, 1941, p. 21. Cunningham was the first to take Creighton's pl. no. X to be this building and Sarasvati blindly followed him. But Creighton's picture is clearly that of the *Gumti Gate.* Creighton does not give the picture of the *Chika Building* at all.
3. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.,* p. 66.

further evolution. This *Chika Building* must be dated within the period of Jalaluddin Muhammad. This dating is corroborated by the evidence obtained from *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, which states that Gaur began to be repopulated during the reign of Jalaluddin. He writes, "At Gaur, he erected a mosque, a reservoir, the Jalali tomb and a caravanserai. The city of Gaur commenced being repopulated in his time."[1] We may take the building for the Jalali tomb.

1. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Eng. Tr., p. 118.

CHAPTER VI

THE ARCHITECTURE OF GAUR

(The Later Ilyas Shahi Style)

1. *Gaur as a capital :* The ancient name Gaur is today applied to the mediaeval ruins of Lakhnauti, situated on a deserted channel of the Ganges (Lat. 24. 53 N ; Long. 88. 14 East) in the district of Malda. The name Lakhnauti is after the last Hindu ruler Lakshmanasena, who was ousted from this part of Bengal by Muhammad Bakht-yar Khalji in A. D. 1204. Bakht-yar established the Muslim seat of government at this place, as Lakhnauti stood just outside the Teliagarhi pass in the Rajmahal hills and thus was centrally situated for a kingdom that incorporated North Bengal and a part of Bihar. But the city was open to the danger of floods, and the capital had to be shifted to the neighbouring localities as the vagaries of the river demanded.[1] Devikot in Dinajpur district assumed importance even in the time of Bakht-yar, and later Hazrat Pandua remained the seat of government since the establishment of the independent Sultanate down to the end of the rule of the House of Raja Ganesha. The transfer of the capital back to Gaur has been well discussed by M.M. Chakravarti, who writes, "The *Riyaz* itself states that he (Jalaluddin Muhammad) and his son lie buried in Pandua, which could hardly have been the case, if he had carried out the important measure of removing the seat of government. I think it is more

1. See M. M. Chakravarti, 'Notes on the geography of Old Bengal *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1908, pp. 281 ff.

likely that this removal took place in the time of Mahmud Shah I, towards the end of his rule. ....The transfer is largely connected with the physical changes of the locality. After much fluctuations, the Ganges seems to have found a comparatively stable course on the west of the city, and its floods probably raised the level of the city on its eastern part. By high embankments on the east and the west, it became now practicable to make the city habitable; and the deep stream flowing on the west must have greatly facilitated trade. On the other hand, the river receded from Pandua and made it less and less accessible and more unhealthy. A change in the dynasty also facilitated the transfer."[1]

2. *The ideal :* Nasiruddin Mahmud I ushered in "the most flourishing period of Lakhnauti, its Augustan age, in which period were constructed the best and the finest remains now existing." With his enthronement the House of Raja Ganesha came to an end, and the old dynasty of Ilyas Shah was restored[2] amidst the plaudits of the people. The restoration not only revived the feelings of loyalty to the dynasty but also inspired the rulers to the fulfilment of those aims and ideals that had just taken shape during the reign of the local converted dynasty. There was no reaction in this period of the later Ilyas Shahis. All their benevolent works indicate a culmination of those currents of social life that were set rolling with the foundation of the Independent Sultanate in Bengal. It is this spirit of search after a common goal that is writ large on the monuments of this period. And in this achievement the building art of Bengal reached its clasical phase - a quality seen alike in the balanced

1. *Ibid*, 1909, p. 205; See also *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 131, where Dr. A. B. M. Habibullah takes for granted that the capital was transferred in the time of Jalaluddin Muhammad.
2. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Eng. Tr., pp. 119-20;

proportion of the different parts of a building as well as in the appropriate manner of decoration. The period witnessed the highest excellence that could be achieved in brick - both in design and decoration. The effect is gained not by over-ornamentation but by subordinating the local terracotta art and assimilating it into the architectural excellence of the building. There is a happy blend of decorative motifs with architectural features in such a way that the whole arrangement really gives credit to the master builders of this time. And for this reason scholars have differed in their choice of the best monument of the time. Some[1] like *Dakhil Darwaza* for its architectural beauty, while others[2] prefer *Tantipara Masjid* for its rich and effective ornamentation.

3. *Old remains of Lakhnauti:* Little is known about the antiquity of the city of Lakhnauti. Except for the surviving names of a few scattered areas no definite material has so far been found to associate the city with the pre-Muslim history of this region. It is less probable that it served as a capital of the Hindu kings unless, of course, it is identified with some other ancient town on the discovery of future materials. But it is probable that the city was in existence in the time of the Senas of Bengal in the 12th century A. D., as many local names recall those of the kings of this dynasty. Whatever remains of this period are traceable, have been well described by Cunningham: "The site of Gaur, on a narrow strip of land between the Ganges and the Mahanadi rivers, would appear to have been selected chiefly for the convenience of water-communication with all parts of the country.................. There are no Hindu remains of any kind to point out the landmarks of

1. Marshall in *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. III, pp. 604-5.
2. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 62.

the ancient city; but perhaps the native names of *Phulwari* (See Fig. no. 5) and *Patal Chandi*, which are still applied to two of the gates, may be taken as evidence of previous Hindu occupation. The old city of the Sena Rajas would thus be confined within the square of 2 miles each side, or 4 square miles of area, extending from the *Phulwari* Gate on the north to the *Patal Chandi* Gate on the south, and from the Ganges on the west to the great rice swamps of the Mahanadi on the east. Within these limits also are found other Hindu names, such as *Ganga-snan*, or the 'Bathing Ghat' at the north-west corner, on the bank of the Bhagirathi, or old Ganges; and the *Lohagadh*, or "Red Embankment", on the south with the divisions of Dharmpur, Biaspur and Ramchandarpur inside. The temples and gardens of course would have been in the suburbs outside. .... As the *Balalbari* lies nearly 4 miles to the north of the *Phulwari Darwaza*, and is completely cut off from it by low swampy ground, it never could have formed part of the city. *Balalbari* or *Baghbari*, as it is also called, is an irregular square about one mile each side. The enclosure is surrounded by a gigantic embankment, 50 feet broad at top and 150 feet broad at base, with a height of 20 feet. On each side, that is, on the inside as well as on the outside, it has a deep ditch 75 feet wide. There are no remains of buildings inside; but there are several causeways crossing at right angles, which were probably the roads of the place."[1]

4. *Muslim remains :*

Of the earliest Muslim city we have several literary references. Minhaj[2] writes, "Through his (Bakht-yar Khalji's) prasise-worthy endeavours, and those of his *amirs*, *masjids*, colleges and

1. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 42-43.
2. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Eng. Tr. by Raverty, pp. 559-60.

monasteries (for *Darweshas*) were founded in those parts." Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khalji built Jami' and other mosques, the fortress of Basankot and an embankment from Lakhnauti to Devkot on one side and to Lakhnor on the other, about ten days' journey. Manhaj also talks of the gate of Lakhnauti.[1] Barani[2] writes of a big bazar of Lakhnauti more than a *kos* long and also of the palace of Tughril. None of these old works is now identifiable. But the fortified city (Fig.5) has been traced, and the description is given in the words of Cunningham,[3] "The ruins of the Muhammadan city of Gaur extend for a length of 11 miles along the east bank of the Bhagirathi River, from the *Phulwari* Gate to the suburb of Firozabad on the south. The city proper within the ramparts, from the *Phulwari* Gate to the *Kotwali Gate* on the south, is 8 miles long, or just twice the length of what I suppose to be the old Hindu city, the whole of the extension being at the southern end. At this end are, all the great Muhammadan buildings, the Minar, the Sona, the Thantipara, the Lattan, the Kadam Rasul, and the Gunmant Masjids, as well as the Dakhil and Kotwali Gates. All these Muhammadan names seem to point out the position of the Moslem city, just as the Hindu names of the Phulwari and Chand Gates and of the *Ganga-snan*, or "Bathing Ghat" point out the site of the Hindu city.

"Owing to the unfortunately low site of the city, it was found necessary to embank it all round at a very early date. Thus, not only are the Hindu and Muhammadan cities completely surrounded by earthen ramparts, but all the roads, both inside and outside, are raised causeways, while the banks of both the Ganges and the

1. *Ibid.*, p. 740.
2. *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi*, Calcutta, 1862, p. 91.
3. *Op. Cit.*, *pp.* 46-48.

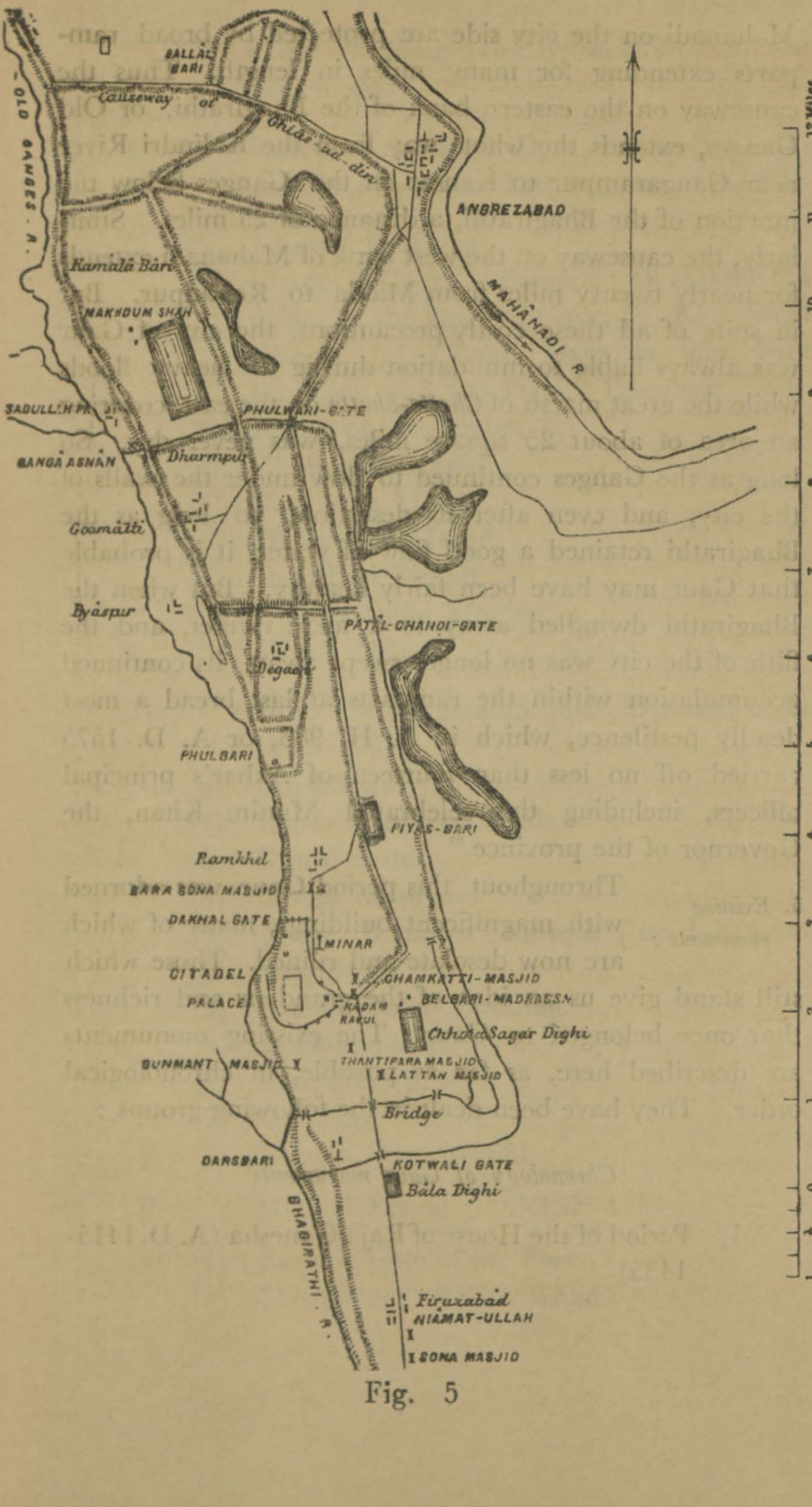

BALLAL BARI
Causeway of Ghias-ud-din
ANGREZABAD
MAHANADI R.
OLD GANGES R.
Kamala Bari
MAKHDUM SHAH
SADULLAH PUR
PHULWARI-GATE
GANGA ASNAN
Dharmpur
Goomatti
Byaspur
PATAL-CHANDI-GATE
Degaon
PHULBARI
PIYAS-BARI
Ramkhel
BARA SONA MASJID
DAKHAL GATE
MINAR
CITADEL
CHAMKATTI-MASJID
PALACE
KADAM RASUL
BELBARI-MADRASSA
Chhota Sagar Dighi
GUNMANT MASJID
THANTIPARA MASJID
LATTAN MASJID
Bridge
DARSBARI
KOTWALI GATE
Bala Dighi
BHAGIRATHI R.
Firuzabad
NIAMAT-ULLAH
SONA MASJID
12 Miles

Fig. 5

Mahanadi on the city side are protected by broad ramparts extending for many miles in length. Thus the causeway on the eastern bank of the Bhagirathi, or Old Ganges, extends the whole way from the Kalindri River near Gangarampur to Kansat on the Ganges below the junction of the Bhagirathi, a distance of 25 miles. Similarly, the causeway on the west bank of Mahanadi extends for nearly twenty miles from Malda to Rohanpur. But in spite of all these costly precautions, the city of Gaur was always liable to inundation during the heavy floods while the great marsh of *Chatta-bhatta* on the east, covering an area of about 25 square miles, was never dry. So long as the Ganges continued to flow under the walls of the city, and even after its desertion, so long as the Bhagirathi retained a good flow of water, it is probable that Gaur may have been fairly healthy. But when the Bhagirathi dwindled away to a mere rivulet, and the filth of the city was no longer swept away, its continued accumulation within the ramparts at last bread a most deadly pestilence, which in A. H. 983, or A. D. 1575 carried off no less than fourteen of Akbar's principal officers, including the celebrated Munim Khan, the Governor of the province."

5. *Existing monuments :* Throughout this period Gaur was adorned with magnificent buildings, many of which are now desolate and ruined. Those which still stand give us an idea of the grandeur and richness that once belonged to Gaur. The existing monuments are described here, as far as possible, in chronological order. They have been dealt in the following groups :

Chronology of Gaur monuments

I. Period of the House of Raja Ganesha (A. D. 1415-1435)

(1) Chika Building (already described in the last chapter).

II. Period of the Later Ilyas Shahis (1435-87) and the Abyssinian Interrugnum (1487-93).

(1) Kotwali Darwaza
(2) Citadel of Gaur (a) Baisgazi wall and the old palace of the kings of Gaur, (b) Khazanchi Khana, (c) Chand Darwaza and Nim Darwaza, and (d) Dakhil Darwaza.
(3) Bridge of Five Arches
(4) Chamkatti Masjid
(5) Tantipara Masjid
(6) Dhunichak Masjid
(7) Darasbari Masjid
(8) Khania Dighi Mosque
(9) Firoza Minar

III. Period of the Husain Shahi Dynasty (A.D. 1493-1538)

(a) Brick Style
(1) Tomb of Husain Shah
(2) Gumti Gate
(3) Lattan Mosque
(4) Jhan Jhaniyan Mosque (or Jahaniyan Mosque)
(5) Qadam Rasul Building
(b) Brick-and-stone style
(1) Bara Sona Masjid
(2) Gunmant Masjid
(3) Chhota Sona Masjid

IV. Mughal Period (A.D.1575-1757).

(1) Eastern Gate of the Fort
(2) Mausoleum of Fath Khan

(3) Tomb of Shah Niamatullah Wali
(4) Mosque in the Dargah of Shah Niamatullah Wali

By comparing this list with that given by other scholars, the reader will notice that my classification as well as dating of the monuments differ considerably from others. They have relied, as far as date is concerned, without any question, on the evidence supplied by Creighton[1] and Cunningham.[2] But their method of ascribing inscriptions found at distant places to particular monuments merely on hearsay or on the length of the inscription tablet being equal to the vacant space on the monument, does not appear to me to be sound. They need checking and rechecking after a thorough study of the monuments on the spot. I believe if a sincere effort is made, the result will not be different from what I have given here after a long continuous study.

(1) *Kotwali Darwaza*

The *Kotwali Darwaza* is the central gate in the south wall of the city of Gaur near the village Mahdipur (Mohiyuddinpur). The name suggests that the chief of police (*Kotwal*) was probably stationed here.[3] The gateway (pl. XIX, no. 36) consisted originally of a lofty brick archway,[4] 31 feet in height and 16 feet span, with a passage of 17′ 4″ in length, through the thickness of the wall. Now, the lofty arch has fallen

1. *Ruins of Gaur*, London, 1817.
2. *Op. Cit.*, Vol. XV.
3. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 76; Munshi Shyam Prasad records that a *naubat* was established here.
4. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 76; Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 69-70; Creighton. *Op. Cit.*, no. IV; J. H. Ravenshaw, *Gaur, its ruins and inscriptions*,. London, 1878, p. 34.

leaving behind an open gap, which is flanked, on the outer side, by a massive round bastion, pierced with two rows of loopholes. On each face of the archway, both inside and outside, tapering semi-circular turrets project from the walls. Upon them, one in each, is carved a deep niche showing a trefoil arch supported on pillars. From the apex of the arch hangs down a chain having a floreate design at the end. The archway was contained within a frame of panels and topped by tiers of moulding. This massive gateway which was built wholly of brick with its surface rubbed smooth and decoration sparse and bold, cannot be conceived earlier than this period. Cunningham[1] goes astray too far when he places it in 13th century A. D. Percy Brown[2] relegates it to the second half of the 14th century A.D. on the ground that the tapering turrets must have been derived from the contemporary Tughlaq architecture. The Tughlaq influence may be accepted, but that does not imply that the *Kotwali Darwaza* should be built within the Tughlaq period. The influence at this place, far away from Delhi, may be felt much later. The excellence in brick-work and carving suggests a much later date. And when we know from history that in the second half of the 14th century A. D. there was no necessity of erecting a gateway at Gaur, we can plausibly suppose that Nasiruddin Mahmud I might have built this *Darwaza* as a measure of protecting the city after he had transferred the capital from Pandua to Gaur. The architecture fits in well with this date.

(2) *Citadel of Gaur*

The *Riyaz-us-Salatin* states that the "high-ranked king", Nasiruddin Mahmud I erected "the buildings of

1. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 70.
2. Op. Cit., p. 36.

Gaur and the fort there".[1] It was natural for this king, under the prevailing circumstance, to have erected a "fort", which probably refers to the citadel of Gaur. The citadel might not have been completed by him but dragged on to the reign of his son Ruknuddin Barbak Shah, who is known from an inscription to have built, in A. D. 1466, *Nim Darwaza*,[2] one of the gates inside the fort. The citadel (pl. XIX, no. 37) is situated on the bank of the old Ganges, in the southern half of the city, just midway between the *Phulwari* and *Kotwali* gates. Its rough oblong plan is disturbed only on the south-east side, where we find many later additions, like *Gumti Gate*, the *Eastern Gate*, and *Qadam Rasul* complex. It is nearly one mile in length from north to south, by quarter of a mile width, but at the *Eastern Gate* it broadens out to about half a mile. It is entirely surrounded by a great earthen rampart, upwards of 30′ in height and about 190′ thick at the base, with round bastions at all the angles, and a deep ditch on the outside, about 200' when full.[3]

(a) *Baisgazi Wall and the Old Palace of the kings of Gaur*

The most important remains within the citadel belong to the palace. It was probably built by Nasiruddin himself, as his son Barbak Shah, in the inscription referred to above, mentions only "a water-course, flowing under the palace", as his own work.[4] The grandeur and magnificence of the palace can be today surmised from its only remains of the massive enclosure wall - a lofty brick wall,

1. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Eng. Tr., p. 120.
2. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 56-58.
3. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 50.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

called *Baisgazi*, apparently because its height is 22 Bengali *gaz* (yard), or 42 feet.[1] The wall, which still exists on the north and the east, surrounded an oblong courtyard, measuring 900′ by 200′. It is a solid mass of brickwork, 15′ thick at the base and 8′ 10″ at the top under the cornice. At every twelve courses, measuring 2′ 1″ in height, the thickness is diminished by stepping the next twelve courses inwards on both sides.[2]

(b) *Khazanchi Khana*

The palace was divided into three parts[3] - the first part to the north being probably used for holding *darbar*. But the local tradition remembers this plot as the *Khazanchi Khana* (House of the treasurer). This area is screened off from the other two by another wall running east-west. The second division was meant for the private quarters, and the third for the harem. Each division had a tank in it, one of these being paved with stone. The tank in the first division is known as *Taksal Dighi* (tank of the mint).[4] An opening on the eastern side of this enclosed wall leads towards the *Chika building*. In between them can be seen an oblong court, enclosed by pillared aisles. The bases of the pillars are still *in situ*. This whole complex was attached to the *Chika building*, probably in some later date. According to the local tradition Government offices were located here.[5] But it appears to be a public

1. Ravenshaw, *Op. Cit.*, p. 18, makes it 66′ in height. Probably he took the yard to be equivalent to the usual length. But here most probably it is equal to the Bengali *gaz* as is argued by Cunningham.
2. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 54; See photograph in Ravenshaw, pl. X.
3. These divisions are corroborated by Francklin and Ravenshaw.
4. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 58.
5. *Ibid*, p. 66.

hall of audience of some later date. About a furlong to the north-east of the *Khazanchi Khana*, and outside the palace enclosure, is a place known as *Bangla Kot.* This was the grave-yard of the later kings of Gaur, especially of the Husaini dynasty. Here once stood the tomb of Alauddin Husain Shah, the founder of the dynasty, but no trace now remains (for its description see next chapter).

(c) *Chand Darwaza and Nim Darwaza*

The main approach into this citadel is from the north through a gateway called *Dakhil Darwaza.* From this northern gate an embanked road led to the palace in the southern half of the citadel passing through two intermediate gates called *Chand Darwaza* and *Nim Darwaza.* The latter stood exactly half way between the northern gate and the palace wall, and probably from its position it derived its name *Nim Darwaza*, meaning "Half-way gate". It was built, as we have seen before, by Ruknuddin Barbak Shah in A. D. 1466. This gate and also the *Chand Darwaza* have now disappeared. Originally they must have marked certain divisions of the extensive quadrangle.[1] Creighton writes, *Chand Darwaza* "is formed of brick and stone, in a magnificent style of Muhammadan architecture........... The extreme height of this gateway is forty-eight feet, and that of the arch thirtytwo feet." The drawing published by Creighton[2] shows a tall two-centred pointed arch, enclosed within a rectangular frame, having tiers of moulding at the top. Below this arch opens an engrailed arch-way with an inscriptional tablet on its top. The wall surface on either side of this central opening is divided into four registers by decorated horizontal mouldings. Each register has three panels

1. *Ibid*, p. 52; Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 52-53.
2. *Op. Cit.*, no. 3.

in a row, within which is seen the favourite hanging motif. The decoration of the facade agrees well with that seen in the *Qadam Rasul building* and *Jhan Jhania mosque*, both built in the time of Nusrat Shah (see next chapter).

(d) *Dakhil Darwaza*

The *Dakhil Darwaza* (pl. XX, no. 38) was the principal "Entrance Gate" to the fort from the north. It is also called *Salami Darwaza*, because salutes were fired from the adjacent ramparts. The date of its erection is not definitely known. But as it is a part of a common palace architectural scheme, it must have been built by either of the first two kings of the later Ilyas Shahi dynasty, preferably the first, Nasiruddin Mahmud I (A. D. 1435-59). The gateway is largely built of brick, and represents in its design the height of excellence that the brick masons of Bengal were capable of achieving. Every part of the gate is proportionately planned, and on the whole they make a bold and effective design. Only a hundred years back at the *Adina Mosque* they failed to execute a building of high conception, though the different parts of that mosque, considered separately, are masterpieces of work. In the course of these few years it seems that the want in designers was made up, and the result we see in the grand *Dakhil Darwaza*. When this development is kept in mind, the following remark of Percy Brown[1] fails to bring out the special achievement in this monument: "Building in brick had been practised for a very long time in these parts, as the numerous remains of previous Buddhist stupas and monasteries are abundant proof, but during the Moslem regime it developed into a form of construction which became pre-eminent,

1. Op. Cit., p. 40.

and in no part of India is there finer work than in the Indo-Islamic architecture of Bengal. The Dakhil Darwaza therefore, as this great structure is called, although of immense proportions, presented no special difficulties to the hereditary brick builders, but nevertheless it is a remarkable testimony to their skill. Built as a triumphal arch, or saluting gateway, and aligned to face the citadel of Gaur, it is believed to have been produced to the order of Barbak Shah." The *Dakhil Darwaza* provides us with an earliest existing example of a gate building complete by itself in the true Bengali style. The facade of the gateway (Fig. 6) meausures 73′ 4″ in breadth and rises to a height of about 60′. From its corners project twelve-sided tapering turrets, five stories in height, and ordinarily crowned by a "Firuzian" cupola. The various stories are demarcated by lozenge-impressed mouldings with decorations of *jali-work* underneath and blind merlons above. The facets depict alternately panels, carved with a floreate motif hanging from the apex of a trefoil arch. The archway, which is 34′ high upto the apex of the pointed arch, is flanked by "a pylon-like buttress, one on each side of the frontage and guarding the portal." The spandrels are embossed with prominent lotus rosettes, above which rise tiers of moulding, crowned higher up with a bold, decorated niche, resembling an oriel window. On its either side is a design consisting of a rosette within a star. The pylons are relieved with off-sets and a series of horizontal mouldings. But the most pleasing are the prominent niches above, harmoniously balancing the one over the frontal archway. The battlements and cornice together with the tops of the turrets and those of the pylons have now disappeared, but originally they must have broken up beautifully the skyline.

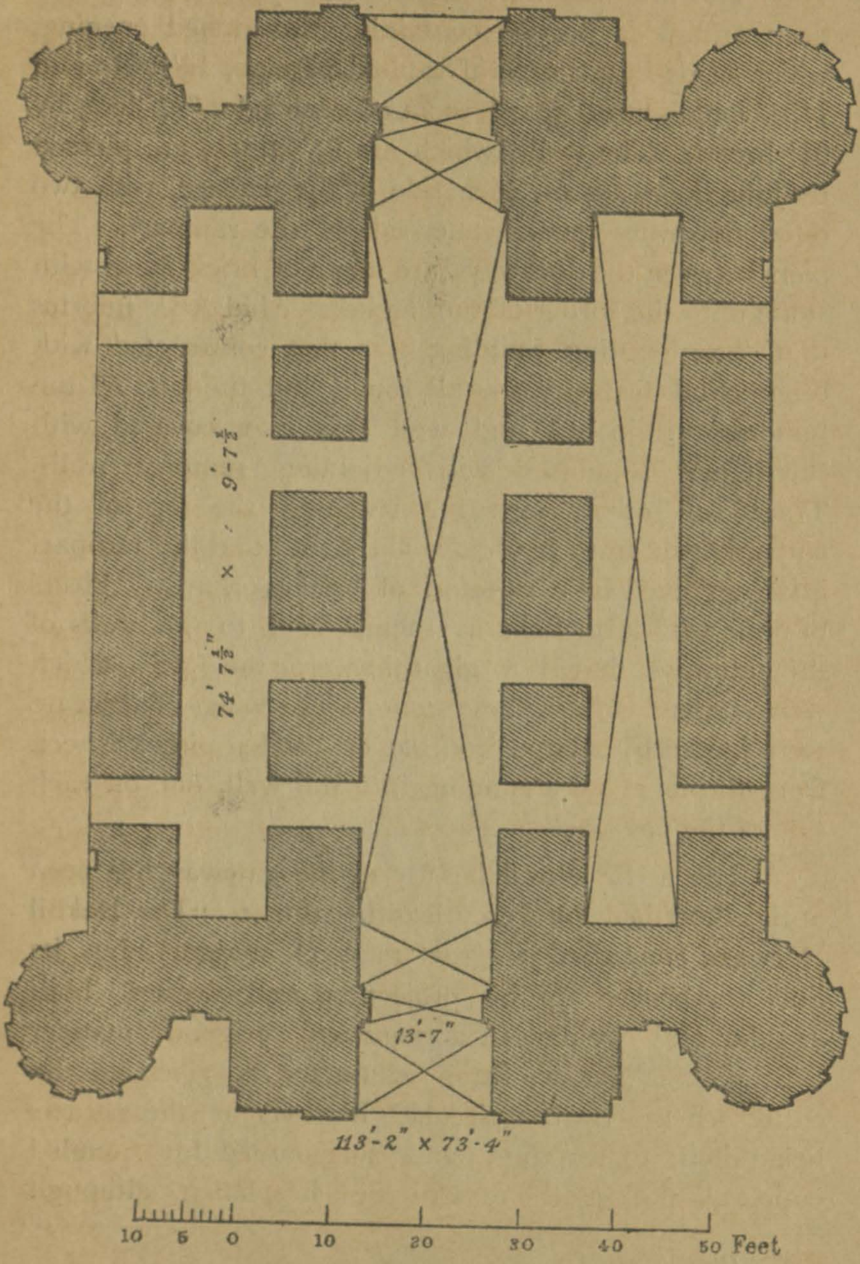


Fig. 6

The archway between the two pylons provides a deep and wide portico containing the arched opening, which leads into a central vaulted passage, 14′ wide and 113¼′ long, with a guard room on each side, 74½′ long by 9½′ broad. The walls, which are 9¾′ thick, are pierced by four doorways on each side of the passage, with two outer doorways on the inner side of the rampart. The piers between the doorways are made of brick faced with stone upto the spring of the arches. Abid Ali[1] informs that "the existing building was first constructed with ornamental facing work all round, but the base of the building on the east and west was later covered with earth and connected with adjoining rampart walls. Traces of *pacca* steps for reaching the top of the embankment from inside are also found and the rampart is strengthened by a skeleton of brick-work..........Pieces of stone with large holes in them, fixed to the walls of the gateways, show how gigantic were the gates which were suspended from these stones. The wings of the gate were bolted by a large iron bar or wooden pin as is seen from the long holes running into the wall, one on each side of the passage."

The architectural beauty of the gateway has been aptly described by Percy Brown[2] thus : "The Dakhil Darwaza comprised a great mass of masonry, but its bulk was broken up by projections and recesses, both angular and circular, in a singularly original manner .... Not a little character is given to the entire scheme by the circular[3] bastions at the corners being built to a taper, and surmounted by rounded cupolas, but most of the structure has fallen, although

1. *Op. Cit.*, p. 51.
2. *Op. Cit.*, p. 40.
3. The bastions are, truly speaking, twelve-sided.

it obviously resolved itself into a picturesque grouping of pyramidal roofs, domes, and similar features, forming a varied and attractive sky-line. The alternation of the surfaces of its facade by means of the turrets and bastions produces striking contrasts of light and shade and these surfaces are enriched by a certain amount of ornamentation in terracotta, consisting of such motifs as flaming suns, rosettes, hanging lamps, fretted borders, decorative niches, and other patterns judiciously distributed. In design the Dakhil Darwaza implies an interesting fusion of the classic and the romanic, with traces of the indigenous or rustic. The classic is representend by the grand shape and proportions of the portal and its arched portico, and the romantic quality may be seen in the position and slope of the corner bastions, while the influence of the country may be observed in the indigenous surface treatment obtained by a system of vertical and upright lines and moulding thus presenting a naively elementary pattern of rectangles."

There are some elements, like the tapering towers and their cupolas, which may have been derived from the Tughlaq architecture of Delhi, but these have been modified and adapted to suit the taste of the Bengalis. The circular tower of Delhi have here been shaped into twelve-sided ones, and the severe plainness of the Tughlaq towers have been clothed and adorned in the typical Bengali fashion with the local terracotta decoration. Indeed, the whole structure is replete with the spirit of the soil on which it stands, and represents in its work the master product of Bengal.

(3) *Bridge of the Five Arches*

Creighton (no. XIII) has given a picture of this bridge, and he states that many bridges of this type were

in existence at Gaur but they have been despoiled of their bricks. One inscription, *in situ*, records that Nasiruddin Mahmud I constructed the bridge in A. D. 1457. The bridge is not far off from the *Kotwali Darwaza.* It was built over a rivulet which constituted the main drain and means of access to the interior of the town. It is a cambered bridge, 275′ long, with a roadway measuring 27½′. It consists of five pointed arches resting on brick piers. The middle arch is of 11′ 6″ span, the next one on each side 10' 3½″, and the end ones 9′ 1″. The piers also lessen in the same manner, the two middle ones being 10′ 6″ thick and the other two 9′ 3″. The cut-waters are triangular in section. No decoration now embellishes the wall surface, nor is there any tower. There are two more bridges in the town of Gaur—one of seven arches is over the same rivulet, and the other of three arches over a channel of water.

(4) *Chamkatti Mosque*

The name of the mosque, *Chamkatti*, suggests that it was probably built by a certain *Chamkatti* class of Muslims, still residing in Chalispara near Old Malda. According to Creighton[1], these were devotees who in religious frenzy, used to gash themselves with knives and were therefore called *Chamkatti* (skin cutters)[2]. The date of its erection is not definitely known, but Cunningham ascribes to it an inscription dated A. H. 880 (A. D. 1475),[3] which falls in the reign of Yusuf Shah of Bengal. Be this date correct or not, the style of this mosque conforms to this period. The mosque is built of brick, but its interior shows stone facing, especially at the lower courses. It consists of a single square room measuring internally 23′ 8″

1. *Op. Cit.*, no. XV.
2. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 69.
3. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 60-61.

with a large vaulted verandah on the east, 9′ 11″ broad. At all the angles octagonal towers project prominently. The facade on the east shows vertical panels and three doorways, one alternating with the other. The panels are ornamented with chain-and-floreate motif, and bordered with glazed tiles in various patterns. The decoration is chaste and graceful. The battlements are slightly curved, and a single dome rises above. The vaulted verandah has an additional doorway on the north and the south. Three doorways lead into the interior square hall. The dome is carried on squinches and further supported by stone pilasters. On the west is a decorated mihrab.

The architectural features of this mosque have been derived from the *Eklakhi mausoleum*, with the addition that a verandah has been provided here. At the *Eklakhi* the Bengali masons tried to build a large dome to cover a square room, and in their attempt they changed the interior hall into an octagon. At the *Chamkatti mosque* they have succeeded in keeping the interior hall square, and the method adopted is simple. Instead of turning the square into an octagon, they used eight stone pillars, one at each angle of the octagon. On them rested the arches and the squinches, which supported the dome. It was probably thought that the stone pillars were sufficient to support the big dome. Henceforth this method became very common. The addition of the vaulted verandah on the east makes another new change in this mosque. Finally the use of glazed tiles bordering the panels makes a graceful setting.

(5) *Tantipara Mosque*

The name Tantipara means "Quarter of the weaver class" (*Tanti + Para*), and the mosque received its present

name probably because it was situated in the locality of the weavers. Abid Ali informs that to the local people it is known as Umar Qazi's Mosque[1], but he prefers on the evidence of Cunningham to ascribe to it an inscription, dated 885 A. H. = A. D. 1480. The inscription speaks of Mirsad Khan as the builder[2] of the mosque. The mosque revives again the old familiar plan of multi-domed oblong mosques, but the design of this mosque shows better proportion and grace and incorporates the spirit of the period. It measures 91′ by 44′ externally, with an octagonal tower at each corner. The walls are 6½′ thick, with five arched openings in front and two at each end. The eastern facade (pl. XX, no. 39) is varied by off-sets and recesses, - the offsets being decorated with two large panels, one above the other, and the recesses containing the arched doorway. The panels (p.l. XXI, no. 40) have scroll borders in high relief, and depict the usual floreate design hanging from the apex of an arch. Similar panels also decorate the corner towers. The battlements and the cornice gently curve in the Bengali fashion, while another line of moulding runs through the middle of the walls, and thus connects the doorways. The interior hall measures 78′ by 31′, and is divided into two aisles by a single row of four stone pillars in the middle. These pillars originally supported the ten domes of the roof, which have now all collapsed. At the corners can still be seen oversailing courses of brickwork beautifully arranged. In the west there are five mihrabs, one opposite each entrance on the east. Each one of them is enclosed within a rectangular frame, the upper side of which shows tiers of moulding crowned with blind merlons. Still higher up is a large flaming sun prominently decorated.

1. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 72.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63; Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 61.

The various parts of this mosque are well proportioned. The ornamentation is rich and effective, and the large decorated panels stand out in high relief against the plain walls. Cunningham remarks, "To my taste this mosque is the finest of all the buildings now remaining at Gaur"[1]. Its excellence lies in its graceful setting of the various architectural elements as well as in prominently displaying the terracotta ornamentation. In his comparison Sir John Marshall regards the *Dakhil Darwaza* and the *Tantipara Mosque* as products of two different styles. He says 'Between the *Dakhil* Gateway and the *Tantipara* Masjid erected (if we may accept the traditional dates) only ten years later, there is a marked divergence of style.............. even in its ruin, it is still an object of beauty. Cunningham considered it the finest edifice of all in Gaur, and if perfection of detail were the criterion of good architecture, his opinion would be fully justified. In the matter of superficial ornament, indeed, the *Tantipara* masjid marks the zenith of the Bengal school. Where the *Dakhil* Gateway is virile, the masjid is effeminate; where the former is free and spontaneous, the latter is mannered and formal ; and even in its lace-like ornamentation, beautiful as it is in itself, must be admitted to be verging on the meretricious[2]." The difference, as it has already been pointed out, is due to the different purposes and ideals, which are mainly responsible for the creation of these two buildings.

(6) *Dhunichak Mosque*

The *Dhunichak Mosque* (pl. XXII, no. 41) is utterly dilapidated, and its date is not known from any inscription. On ground of style it can be dated to this

1. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 62.
2. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. III, p. 605,

period. Abid Ali[1] makes some confusion between this mosque and the *Khania Dighi Mosque*, standing not far from this place. His description, "The mosque in question is 62′ in length by 42′ in breadth. There is one large dome, and on the east three small domes", fits in very well with the latter mosque. Portions of only west and north walls are now existing, but the back of the west wall is denuded of many of its bricks, and the corner towers have all disappeared. There are two stone pillars in the court, one fallen and the other standing, but it is not in its right position. Stone pilasters can be seen in the west wall and oversailing courses of bricks at the north-west corner. These traces prove that the hall was covered by a single large dome. There are three dilapidated mihrabs on the west, the central one bigger than others. Some of the ornamentation at the central mihrab is preserved. The arch is cusped, while its spandrels show tree-motif intertwing within its branches the prominently projected rosettes. The rectangular frame, which borders the mihrab, has the usual creeper device, and its upper side is decorated with tiers of moulding. The crowning pattern is a row of ornamental merlons, equally distributed between five spaced *kalasha-motifs*. The designs are boldly carved and speak of free movement.

(7) *Darasbari Mosque*

'Darasbari' means a lecture room, or the *madrasah*, which seems to have been originally attached to the mosque, and hence the name *Darasbari Masjid*. Its date is almost definitely fixed from a large inscription discovered from its ruins. It was built by Sultan Yusuf Shah in 884 A. H. (A. D. 1479). In its style of decoration

1. *Op. Cit.*, p. 76.

and chaste designing it resembles very much the *Tantipara Mosque*, but in lay-out and general features there is a great difference. The mosque has suffered badly owing to harshness of nature. The whole of its roof has fallen down, and the corner towers have disappeared. Still from the existing remains (pl. XXIV, no. 43) it is possible to reconstruct its original design. The mosque consists of two parts - the main prayer chamber and the attached verandah on the east. The oblong prayer chamber measures internally 99′ 5″ by 38′ 9″, and the verandah is 10′ 7″ broad. At all the angles - six in all including the two of the verandah - the bases of corner towers still exist. There were seven arched openings on the eastern side, the middle one bigger than the others. The arches rested on massive brick piers - some of them are in situ - the like of which we have seen at the mosque of *Zafar Khan Ghazi*. The oversailing courses of bricks sticking on to the corners, except at the central opening, suggest that the verandah was covered with six domes and a different one in the middle. We enter the prayer hall through the same number of doorways, as there are for the verandah. The hall is divided into three sections, a central nave, measuring 38′ 9″ by 17′ 9″ and the side halls, each 37′ 4″ by 38′ 9″. The side halls are divided into three aisles by two rows of stone pillars, which supported nine domes in either wing. In the northern wing, at the north-west corner, the pillars are massive and octagonal. They must have supported a ladies' gallery in the second storey. The remains, still traceable outside the northern wall of the mosque suggest that it was approached by a flight of steps from outside. The central nave is a single hall with three arched openings towards north and south. At the top corners no trace of the corbelled pendentive is seen, and therefore it could not have been

covered by hemispherical domes. Instead, traces of lateral arches are still existing, which suggest that the central nave was roofed over by three uniform covers. It is suggested that this nave had a "barrel-shaped[1]" or "a long vault[2]" like that of the *Adina* and *Gunmant* Mosques. But a comparison with the existing vault of of the latter mosque clearly shows that these suggestions are wrong. The important point to observe is the presence of lateral arches, which we also meet with at the *Chhota Sona Masjid* (See next chapter) and Sath Gumbad Mosque at Bagerhat (See chapter VIII). The similarity is so complete that there can be hardly any doubt that here also the cover consisted of the Bengali *Chauchala* roof type. A similar *chauchala* cover was placed over the middle bay of the eastern verandah. In the western wall there are nine miharabs, three in each section. The arches of the mihrabs are multi-cusped and rest on highly decorated brick pilasters. The interior of the mihrab lively depicts floral and other decorative motifs in various patterns. Each mihrab is bordered by a rectangular frame showing creeper device. The upper side is crowned with prominent mouldings and blind merlons. Still higher up is an outline of the arch-tympanum, which is relieved with various designs. One such tympanum (pl. XXIII, no. 42) is sub-divided into small rectangles, each containing a beautiful rosette, while another shows a tree-motif, twisted and turned in a fanciful design. The carving is deep and the ornamentation is boldly projected.

The ruined condition of the *Darasbari* has given rise to many misconceptions. The one about the central nave has already been pointed out. Probably that wrong idea led S. K. Sarasvati to doubt even the date of its

1. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 77.
2. S. K. Sarasvati, *Op. Cit.*, p. 19.

erection. He says, "Such dates are based on uncertain facts; stylistically they are essentially analogous to the Adina and do not appear to be far removed from it in date.[1]" This assertion is far from truth. There is a gulf of difference between the style of the two mosques, if the word style is taken in its real sense. Architecturally speaking, the *Darasbari* is better proportioned in its various parts and harmoniously combined to give an effect of grace, while the *Adina* aspires, from its very conception, to show off its grandeur and magnificence. The first breathes the spirit of the religious architecture of the period, while the second strives to express the bold vision of the proud king, Sikandar Shah, who had successfully concluded his relations with the imperial monarch of Delhi. The decorations of the *Adina* clearly shows the mental reserve and limitations with which the craftsmen represented their art. They had to seek gloomy corners and unimportant places to tell of their secret love for folk art and figure motifs. But by the time the *Darasbari* was built the rulers were naturalised in the soil of Bengal, and the ruled contented with their benign government. The kings patronised the art of Bengal and gave full freedom to the craftsmen to express what they loved. The result was an upsurge of the subconscious idea that now found expression in the buildings of this period. The ornamentation that we now see, is not only boldly brought out, but they are also judiciously distributed over the various parts of the building so as to enhance their beauty in detail. We, however, find many similarities between the *Adina* and the *Darasbari*. The internal ground plan of the latter resembles that of the western wing of the *Adina*, with the only difference that there we have a verandah on the eastern side. Many of the decorative

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1. *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. IX, 1941, p. 32

motifs are also drawn from the same source. The idea of the ornamental false tympanums over the mihrabs is also taken from that mosque. These similarities only prove the continuance of the old idea, but the *Darasbari* is a product of the Later Ilyas Shahi period, as the new developments clearly bear out.

(8) *Khania Dighi Mosque*

What Abid Ali[1] describes as the *Dhunichak* or *Rajbibi masjid* appears to be the present mosque. He places this mosque "between the two tanks called Balus Dighi and Khania Dighi", and gives the measurement as 62′ by 42′. No other writer describes this mosque, as it was concealed in a thickly forested area. It is a brick-built mosque and follows the same plan as that of the *Chamkatti mosque*. The main prayer chamber, which is covered by a single dome, is 28′ square. It is fronted on the east by a verandah, covered by three hemispherical domes, which have all now fallen. Here again stumpy pillars are used to support the dome. The phase of transition is made by corbelled pendentive. There are three doorways on the eastern face, and the wall surface was originally decorated with carved bricks. A part of the ornamentation at the southern cornice is still preserved. We have here three rows of decoration between the cornice mouldings - the chain at the lowest and a series of niches with flowers in the upper two - the same system of decoration as seen for the first time in the *Eklakhi mausoleum* (pl. XVIII, no. 34). Down below we also get separate panels with hanging motif. The detail and the plan agree very well with the style seen in the Second Ilyas Shahi period.

1. Op. Cit., p. 76.

(9) *Firoza Minar*

The last ruler of the Ilyas Shahi dynasty, Jalaluddin Fath Shah was killed by the chief of the palace guards, *Khwajasara Sultan Shahzada*, an Abyssinian eunuch. The event was a result of palace intrigue. But when the murderer ascended the throne, assuming the title of Barbak Shah, and tried to assert the royal prerogatives he was opposed by the Amir al-Umra Malik Andil, the Abyssinian commander of the forces, whose loyalty for the uprooted dynasty was unquestionable. At last the murderer was avenged. The eunuch was paid in his own coins. The throne was again vacant. This time the choice fell on the loyal commander, who accepted the regal power and assumed the title of Saifuddin Firoz[1]. This whole affair was confined to the court, and there was no disturbance at all in the kingdom. The peace and prosperity continued. Old traditions still shaped the thoughts and ideals of men. Only the personality of the new ruler infused a different spirit. Firoz was above all a soldier, and he had won many victories as a commander of the forces under the last Ilyas Shahi ruler. When he inclined towards building activity, he thought first of a tower of victory. The *Riyaz-us-Salatin*[2] records, "A mosque, a tower and a reservoir in the city of Gaur, were erected by him." The mosque has disappeared, but the tower, under the name of *Firoza Minar*, still stands beside a large tank.

The name '*Firoza*' has given rise to many conjectures. Some have derived it from *Pirasa*, a corrupted term loosely applied by the local people to this tower. Others take it to refer to Sultan Firoz. Cunningham[3] opines "that

1. *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, ed. by J. N. Sarkar, pp. 137-39.
2. Engl. Tr.; p. 125.
3. *Op. Cit.*, *pp*. 57-58.

Firozah Minar means simply 'Blue Tower', from the turquoise-coloured glaze with which it was faced." The date of its erection is not definitely known. The method, by which Francklin and Cunningham ascribed to this tower a broken inscription found at the Goamalti indigo factory and mentioning one Saifuddin, is not at all sound. The only other evidence is the record in the *Riyaz-us-Salatin* which is supported by the very name of the *Minar*. The style of architecture also points out that the builder can be no other than Saifuddin Firoz. Cunningham[1], in giving an earlier date to this monument wrongly quotes Fergusson. In the words of the latter ; "There is said to have been an inscription on this monument which ascribed its erection to Saifuddin Firoz Shah II, who reigned in Gaur from A.D. 1488 to 1490, and the character of the architecture fully bears out this ascription[2]."

The tower (pl. XVII, no. 33) stands at present on an embanked earth, over which a flight of steps goes up to the entrance on the west side. Abid Ali[3] records, "It is supposed that the basement of the tower was originally faced with polished stones in the form of steps all round; but considering that the rough stone work at the base was originally below the ground and that the tower was built on a hillock, the archaeological department suggested strengthening the base with earth-work and turfing it over so that it might look like a mound and this suggestion was carried out in 1911." On the other hand Cunningham reports, "The facing of the lower part of the tower for 10 feet in height, between the ground and the door sill has been removed long ago. There is nothing to show its shape, but I suppose it to have been a circular

1. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
2. Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Vol. II, London, 1910, p. 260.
3. *Op. Cit.*, p. 54.

or octagonal plinth, not less than 28 or 30 feet in diameter, From the foot of the door the tower rises in three storeys of twelve sides, each storey being demarcated by bands of ornament. Above this point, in the fourth and fifth storeys, it becomes circular and less and less in diameter the last storey, which was originally an open arched room covered by a dome, as seen in Creighton's drawing, has been changed by a modern restorer into an open flat roof as seen today. The circular portion is marked off from the lower by a projecting stone *chhajja*. The band separating other stories is also made up of stone, and is prominently projected from the brick surface, which shows *jali work* immediately below and above the bands. Each storey has a doorway facing west, while the facets are panelled and decorated with hanging motif. A spiral staircase of 73 steps within the tower leads up to the top storey. The tower is about 84′ high and the circumference at the base is 62′.

The idea of this victory tower is no doubt derived from the *Qutb Minar* of Delhi, but except for the general similarity, the *Firoza Minar* is typically a product of Bengali architecture. The tower is twelve sided (at least its three lower storeys), and we no longer find the angular and circular flutes. Instead we have the usual chain-and-bell motif. Cunningham compares it with the corner turrets of the *Dakhil Darwaza*. Though the comparison is clear to some extent, still the present *minar* is not a replica of the *Dakhil Darwaza* towers. Rightly speaking, it is the Bengali version of the *Qutb Minar*.

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1. *Op. Cit.*, p. 59.

CHAPTER VII

THE ARCHITECTURE OF GAUR
(The Husain Shahi Style)

1. Chief character of the age: The Abyssinians were upstarts, among whom Saifuddin Firoz was a man of genius and personality. His death[1] in A. D. 1490 again gave opportunity to the self seekers to make a bold bid for the throne. The fortunate ones succeeded to occupy it one after the other, but their ill-famous deeds drove the people to rebellion. The people won over the support of Sayyid Husain, the shrewd *Wazir* of the last ruler, Shamsuddin Muzaffar (Sidi Badr Diwana). When his fate was decided, Sayyid Husain was proclaimed king in A.D. 1493 amid peoples' rejoicing. He founded the Husain Shahi dynasty, under whose rule Bengal expanded in her political boundary and prospered in trade and commerce.

Sayyid Alauddin Abul Muzaffar Husain Shah was the son of Sayyid Ashraf al Husaini, an Arab nobleman, who had recently migrated to Bengal. "As he was himself of noble descent, according to the saying, 'Everything turns back to its origin', he took the Syeds, Mughals and Afghans by the hand, and sent efficient district officers to different places, so that peace in the country being secured anarchy and revolutions which had occurred during the period of the Abyssinian kings, etc., vanished, and all disloyal elements were reduced to order". Husain Shah was thus able to restore the peaceful conditions of former reign. The life with its multifarious activities

1. According to reliable source he was murdered by the palace guards see *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Eng. Tr., p. 127.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

was once again set in motion. His military conquest brought in more and more affluence, which encouraged architectural activity in all parts of the kingdom. His generous patronage gave impetus to local arts and crafts, and tolerance culminated in the cult of *Satyapir*[1] - which represents a rapprochement of Hinduism and Islam on the plane of common man's life. Men of rank were inspired to patronise Bengali language and literature. But in architecture the classical age came to an end with the disappearance of the Ilyas Shahis. The excellent design and superb proportions of the *Dakhil Darwaza* were no more to be found. The master skill, which produced the ornamentation of the *Tantipara Masjid*, was gradually attracted towards richness in flowering and brilliance in tillery. Buildings, no doubt, were erected in greater number and throughout the kingdom. The style also that prevailed everywhere was uniform. The features that were evolved in the earlier period were faithfully copied, and the terracotta art also found expression in the usual places. But there was no outstanding creation, except in the richness of glazed tiles. The monument that ranks high from this point of view is the *Lattan Masjid*. We also notice a revival of stone cutter's art. This art, however, does not possess the depth and liveliness which were once its very soul. While the Ilyas Shahi period reached the height of excellence in Bengali Muslim architecture, during the Husain Shahi age it prospered and spread to every nook and corner of Bengal and even beyond into Assam[2] and Bihar.[3]

1. See Dinesh Chandra Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, pp. 796-97. Havell's interpretation of this cult is too far-fetched. See his *Indian Architecture*, pp. 122-23.
2. Gateway at Dimapur is built in the the typical Bengali fashion. see *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1874, pp. 3-4 and pl.IV
3. See Pir Shah Nafa's tomb at Monghyr in M. H. Kuraishi :

2. Classification: The architecture of the Husain Shahi period falls into two groups: (a) To this group belong those monuments which are built of brick; (b) In this category we include those buildings which have stone facing and show carved designs on the stone slabs. Though the material and the technique are different, the art follows similar style.

(a) The Brick Style

(1) *Tomb of Alauddin Husain Shah*

Francklin, in 1812, speaks of the *tomb of Alauddin Husain Shah* as being still in existence, and calls it "*Badshah ki qabr.*" But H. Beveridge[1] doubts the veracity of this statement. He relies more on Glazier's *report on Rangpur*, appendix A, p. 107, where it is recorded that Captain Adams removed the tomb stones from the graves of Husain Shah and Nursrat Shah as early as A. D. 1766. This may be true as far as the graves proper are concerned but Creighton gives a drawing (See pl. XXVI, no. 45) of a beautiful gateway, which led to an enclosure, even now remembered as the place where Husain Shah was buried. Creighton gives the correct account as follows: "The gateway and the surrounding walls were cased with bricks, curiously carved, and beautifully glazed blue and white, in the manner of Dutch tiles in Europe. The greatest part of the materials which formed these tombs have now disappeared. Mr. Orme, the historian, who many years since visited these ruins, tells us, that they were removed by a Captain Adams, for the use of some public works in Fort William; and that they were then

List of Ancient Monuments in Bihar and Orissa : archaeological survey of India, Calcutta, 1931, pp. 213-15.

1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1894, pp. 90-91.

lying by the waterside ready for transportation, five pieces of black stone, highly polished, each measuring twelve feet in length, and two feet in breadth and thickness, which formed part of the steps." The gateway was a highly embellished monument showing various designs in carved brick and glittering tiles. It consisted of a single wall, the like of which is even now preserved at the *Chhota Sona Masjid* (though its facing stones are now gone,), pierced by an archway. The arch appears to have been built with stones. The wall shows several horizontal rows of moulding, impressed with designs in brick and interspersed with glazed tiles.

(2) *Gumti Gate*

Gumti Gate (pl. XXVII, no. 46) provides an entrance passage from the east into the citadel of Gaur. The rampart wall still exists abutting the north and south sides of the building Its date of erection is not definitely known. Abid Ali[1] atrributes to it an inscription of Alau-uddin Husain Shah, dated A. H. 918 (A. D. 1512), which was found at the shrine of Shah Niamatullah Wali at Firozpur. There is, however, another inscription of Nusrat Shah, dated A. H. 926 (A. D. 1519), found near the *Dakhil Darwaza*, which also speaks of the erection of a gateway. Out of these two, that of Husain Shah is more probable, as it records the erection of *Bab al-Hasan*, i. e. "gate of the fort". Whether this ascription is correct or not, the style belongs to this period. There is a gulf of difference between its dazzling feminine beauty, characterised by profusion of glazed tiles, and the robust *Dakhil Darwaza* with its chaste ornamentation.

The gateway follows the usual, plan of a single-domed square building with octagonal towers at the four

1. Op. Cit., p. 67.

corners. Externally it measures 42′ 8″ each side, with walls 8′ 8″ thick. The main passage is east-west through an arched entrance of 5′ span. The doorway is slightly inset within a rectangular frame, the upper side of which shows tiers of mouldings crowned with small decorative niches. It is also flanked with fluted column of brick-work, highly decorated with glazed tiles and other designs. The corner towers have all disappeared, except their base mouldings. The battlements and the triple cornice show the usual curvature. The decoration at the cornice is still preserved at some places. There are three rows—the lowest being a pattern of *jali* work, and the above two showing a series of small decorative niches—the rows being separated by a line of lozenges. The whole is further embellished with enamelled tiles. The side-walls are also relieved with vertical off-sets and recesses, showing respectively boldly projected panels and carved designs of hanging motif. A single hemispherical dome covers the square room. It is supported below on stone pilasters, the 'phase of transition' being achieved by squinches. In the style of ornamentation and the motive behind its architectural features *Gumti Gate* betrays a close similarity with the *Lattan Masjid* (See below). Both express the feminine beauty in its dazzling charm. The turrets flanking the doorway recall those of the *Adina Masjid* (See pl. VII, nos. 15 and 16).

(3) *Lattan Masjid*

On the name *Lattan*, Cunningham observes, "The name of this mosque is universally believed to be derived from *Nattu*, a favourite dancing girl of the king, after whom it was called the *Nattan Masjid*, or, as it is more generally pronounced, the Lattan Masjid".[1] Abid Ali[2] also records,

1. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 62.
2. *Op. Cit.*, p. 74.

"There is a local tradition that the mosque was built by a dancing girl who, being a favourite of some king, acquired much wealth and built the beautiful mosque with all the money she had, as meritorious work. She concealed her name and put the king's name in the inscription tablet. The original meaning of the word is a 'Tumbler pegeon'. It may therefore be that the dancing girl received her name *Lattan* from her acrobatic dancing. Really speaking, the word is derived from its Sanskrit original *Natin* or *Nati*, meaning a dancing girl. It is very probable, as it is not unusual, that the mosque was built by a dancing girl and hence its present name. Dr. Bloch's suggestion that its guady decoration has given rise to the name, *Lattan Mosque*, meaning "the mosque, which resembles a dancing girl" in its appearance is far fetched. It was not this mosque alone, which showed profusion of glazed tiles. The *Gumti Gate* is equally well gaudy. In fact, the character of the Husain Shahi architecture is over-emphasis on decoration.

The date of this mosque is given by Cunningham as 880 A. H. (A. D. 1475). This date has been tacitly accepted by all. Cunningham[1] writes : "Creighton states that it was built in 880 A. H. by Yusuf Shah, and though he says nothing about any inscription, I feel satisfied that he must have seen one, either attached to the building, or lying somewhere near it, and has forgotten to quote it, as he is always very careful to note his authorities for the dates which he gives. At the time of Francklin's visit the inscription has certainly been removed. The vacant panel in which it was fixed over the middle doorway is 6′ 6″ in length by 1′ 11″ in height, which I record here in the hope that some day the inscribed slab belonging to the masjid may thereby be identified". This date of

1. *Op. Cit.*, p. 62.

Cunningham cannot be accepted against the overwhelming evidence of the style of the mosque. It does not fit in at all with the monuments of the Ilyas Shahi period. Its plan is, no doubt, the same as in the *Chamkatti Mosque* (See Ch. VI), but its character definitely places it in the Husain Shahi period.

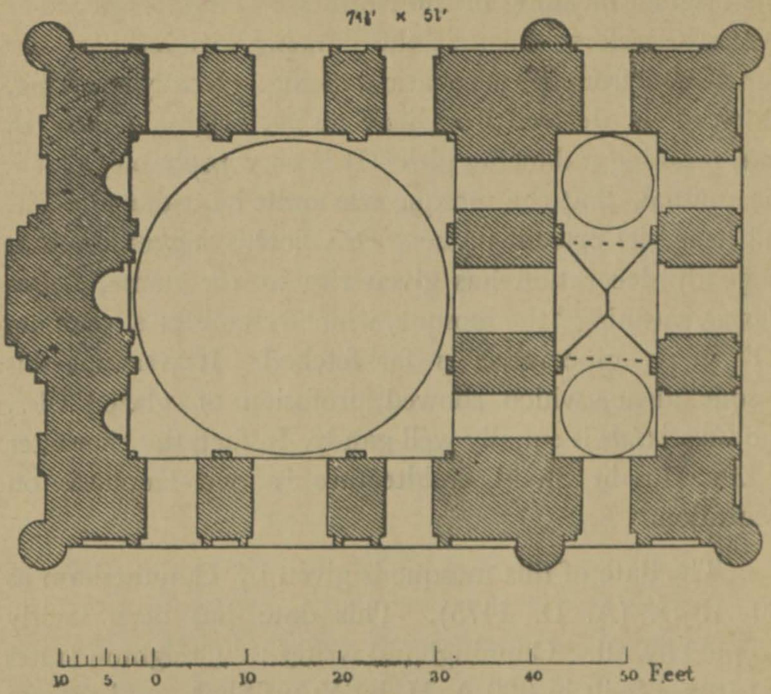


Fig. 7

The *Lattan mosque* (Fig. 7) consists of a square room, measuring 34′ each side, with a corridor 11′ wide on the east, and octagonal towers at the corners. Externally it measures 72′ long by 51′ broad. There are three arched entrances on the east, and the doors alternate with deep vertical panels one above the other (pl. XXVIII, no. 47). Each panel contains a beautiful niche, formed of a multi-cusped arch springing from decorated pillars. The battlements and cornice are very gently curved, above which rise the three domes of the verandah and a large one

over the central room. The middle dome of the verandah is of the *chauchala* roof type. The main big dome is standing on a low shoulder decorated with blind merlons. The corner tower is decorated with number of mouldings dividing it into three sections. Each section is ornamented with round flutes. The back of the west wall also shows fluted columns on either side of the mihrab projection. This is of the same type as seen in the *Gumti Gate*. There are three doorways on each of the east, north and south sides to enter inside the room. On the west there are three mihrabs. The dome is supported on stone pilasters and elaborately decorated corbelled pendentives (pl. XXIX, no. 48) at the corners.

The mosque was originally profusely decorated, but now much of it has disappeared. In order to give the correct idea of its decoration I will quote Cunningham, who saw the monument in a better condition ; "The whole surface of the masjid, both inside and outside, was once covered with glazed tiles in various patterns of four colours, green, yellow, blue and white, the pattern being formed of hexagons touching at the angles, with triangular pieces, alternately white and blue in the interstices. Nearly the whole of the outer glazing has fallen off, but the interior glazing is still in fair order, with the exception of the flat dome and floor, both of which have been very much injured by bats, the former by the incrustation of their nests, the latter by their dung. Francklin has given an enthusiastic description of the beauty of this mosque, which he thinks is not surpassed for "elegance" of style, lightness of construction, or tasteful decoration, in any part of Upper Hindustan." I freely admit that the general appearance of the building is decidedly pleasing, but I dispute the lightness of construction, and deny altogether the tastefulness of the decoration......... With

regard to the taste shown in the decoratioon, I will take Francklin's own selection of the *kibla* arch as an example. The arch over the prayer niche is a low, pointed one, with the joints of the white voussoirs marked by thin blue lines. This certainly looks well, but all its good effect is completely spoiled by narrow horizontal lines of different colours in the spandrils, with the same repeated on the wall below the springing of the arch, while the middle of the arch itself is filled with a small chequer pattern in blue and white. The wall below the spring of the arch is divided into three parts perpendicularly, and into a succession of narrow horizontal lines............... The flowers of blue and white in the middle of the spandrils are rich and effective, the cornices are all good, and the battlements round the dome, wherever they have been spared by the weather, show a bold treatment that is wanting in the designs of the interior. The general view of the *Lattan Masjid* is certainly pleasing but for graceful outline, beauty of ornament, and stateliness of appearance, I greatly prefer the Old Minar, the Tantipara mosque and the Dakhil gateway."[1]

The choice of Cunningham is perfectly justified. He only failed to see that the difference between the *Lattan Masjid* and the other group of buildings lies not merely in architectural beauty but in their very character. They are products of two different periods, when different ideals of beauty governed the life of man. *Dakhil* and *Tantipara* are the products of one period, while the *Lattan* represents the conception of another period, which was saturated with richness and dazzling effect of prosperity. It truly bears the stamp of the Husain Shahi age.

1. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 63-65.

(4) *Jhan Jhania Masjid.*

The name of the mosque is a corrupted form and appears to have been derived from that of the well-known saint, Jahaniyan Jahangasht. The mosque is situated a little to the south of the tomb of Akhi Sirajuddin, another famous Muslim saint of Lakhnauti. The mosque is the latest of the buildings of this period at Gaur, having been erected in 941 A. H. (A.D. 1535), during the reign of Ghiyasuddin Mahmud Shah, son of Husain Shah. The mosque (pl. XXX, no. 49) has the usual oblong plan, measuring 56′ long by 42′ wide, with octagonal turrets at the four corners. The facade is very ornately decorated, verging on flamboyancy. Besides the curved battlements and triple cornice, the elevation is divided into four parts by bands of moulding following the same curvature. And these parts are filled with terracotta panels. This is a new type of decoration also seen in the *Qadam Rasul* building (see below). The corner towers are decorated in the same fashion and they are topped by tall brick-built pinnacles, a novel feature. The roof is covered with six domes having lotus finials. The interior of the mosque is divided into two aisles by stone pillars in the middle, and can be entered through three doorways on the east and two on the north and south. The west wall has three decorated mihrabs. The mosque is well preserved, but it is difficult to say whether the lotus finials and pinnacles are original or later additions. They appear to be of Mughal influence.

(5) *Qadam Rasul Building*

The building is known after the foot-print of the Prophet (*Qadam-i-Rasul*) deposited inside the domed building. Abid Ali records the following tradition,

"Inside the building, under the dome, there is a small carved pedestal of black marble, intended to receive a stone representation of the foot-print of the Prophet Muhammad. This was formerly at Pandua in the *Chilla khana* of Shah Jalaluddin Tabrizi. It was removed by Husain Shah to Gaur in a beautiful wooden box-table, formerly inlaid with gold and silver work, which is still preserved in this building. During the reign of Nawab Sirajuddaula the footprint was carried off to Murshidabad, but was restored to its place by Mir Jafar. It is now in the custody of the two brothers, Zinnat Mulla and Firoz Mulla, of Mahdipur .... It is said that the footprint of the Prophet was first brought by a saint called Makhdum Jahaniyan Jahangasht from Arabia. He brought also the *Jhanda* (heraldic device mounted on a staff) which is still preserved in the shrine of Hazrat Shah Jalal at Pandua[1]". Mirza Nathan[2] gives another tradition about this foot-print. He says, "Sulayman Gawriya, one of the rulers of Gawr, spent a large sum of money and brought it (i. e. the footprint) from Arabia and preparing a throne, he placed that holy foot-print on it with great veneration so that the people of Bengal and every body else, who were destined to come here, might attain the eternal blessing by kissing the holy foot-print." We know of only one Bengal ruler who bore the name of Sulaiman. He was a Karrani ruler, who reigned in Bengal between A.D. 1565-72[3]. In view of one existing inscription this tradition does not seem to be correct.

The date of this building is definitely fixed by an inscription, still *in situ*, over the front door. It records

1. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 63-64.
2. *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi*, Eng. Tr. by Dr. M. I. Borah, Vol. I, pp. 145-46.
3. *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, ed. by J. N. Sarkar, p. 181.

that Sultan Nusrat Shah, son of Husain Shah, erected this monument in A.H. 937 (A.D. 1531).

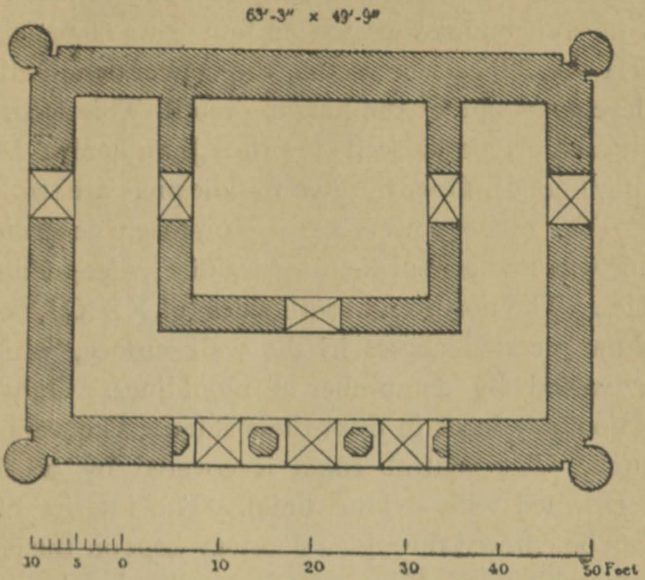


Fig. 8

The building (See Fig. 8) consists of a central square room, measuring 19′ each side internally, with a verandah, 15′ broad, on the north, east and south, the the whole outside measurement being 60′ by 39′ 6″, exclusive of the octagonal towers at the four corners[1]. The eastern facade (p. XXXI, no. 50) is highly decorated and differs from other sides. It shows three arched openings resting on massive but short octagonal pillars, the like of which we have already seen in the *Mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi* (pl. I, no. 1). The spandrels of the arches are embossed with lotus rosettes, above which can be seen tiers of moulding. The battlements and the triple cornice are gently curved, their curvature being also followed by

1. The measurements given by Cunningham are totally wrong. According to him the internal room is 25′ 2″ by 15′, which makes a rectangle. How could a dome be erected over this by the Bengali masons?

another brick building which divides the facade into two equal halves. Each half shows two rows of panels one above the other and thus we get four rows of panels (pl. XXXIII, no. 52) each depicting the conventionalised pattern developed out of the hanging motif. This decoration is of the same type as seen in the Jhanjhaniya Masjid (See above no. 4). Over the two middle piers are two more panels. The corner towers are also profusely decorated in the same way and are surmounted by nicely-designed stone pinnacles. The north and south sides (pl.XXXII, no. 51) only show recessed chases in the wall surface, which is further varied by a number of mouldings. Only one arched doorway leads in from these sides. The verandah is vaulted. The central room is covered by a single dome, crowned with a lotus finial. The interior of the room can be entered through a doorway kept on the north, east and south sides. The west is totally closed. There is no mihrab, as it is not a mosque[1]. In the centre of the room is raised a small carved pedestal of black stone in order to receive a stone representation of the foot-print of the Prophet.

Following Cunningham, S.K. Sarasvati[2] classifies the building as a distinct type of mosque on the ground that it has corridors on the three sides. These corridors were necessary in such a building, which is not attached to a mosque. They were utilised by the visitors to sit and devote sometime in pious reflection. On the west side no verandah has been kept simply because it is improper to keep one's back either towards the *Qibla* or towards the foot-print.

1. Cunningham is wrong in calling it a mosque. See *Op. Cit.*, p. 54. Probably the mistake started from the time of Munshi Shyam Prasad, who, being unfamiliar with Muslim religious priniciples, called the building as *masjid*. See Appendix.
2. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 31-32.

On its architectural merit Percy Brown aptly remarks "The Qadam Rasul at Gaur, in spite of its ponderous columns, records in other parts of its composition that littleness of treatment which usually predicts the approaching decline. Its wall surfaces are divided up into a monotonous diagram of panels, each repeating the same meaningless and stilted motif, giving the whole a trite and stylized appearance. It is from such an example showing the beginning of the decadence, that the true value of the style may be appraised, specially in the insistent curve of the cornice, its most original and characteristic feature. In the first buildings the effect of this downward curve has the charm of strangeness and possesses a certain refinement not by any means unpleasing. But in the Qadam Rasul, and also to a lesser degree in the mosque at Bagha, built in the same decade, the elements with which it is combined and supported have lost their robustness, with the result that the whole structure tends to become flaccid and formless." The over-emphasis on surface ornamentation with repeated panels and the copy of old features mar the real beauty of the monument. The only variety is found in the addition of stone pinnacles, the origin of which is still shrouded in darkness.

(b) **Brick-and-stone style**

In the first phase of building construction the Muslims generally used stones taken from older structures. These stones were used either *in situ* as in the *tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi* at Tribeni, or in the new constructions, e.g. in the *mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi*. Sometimes the architectural pieces, collected from various places, were used in the appropriate manner in the new buildings as at the *Adina Mosque*. Everywhere they took precaution either to deface the figure representation

or to set the sculptured stones with figures concealed inside the masonry. The stone carving seen in this period frankly betrays the decadent style. When it was realised that stone from older structures were not easy to get, the brick architecture got upperhand, with the *Eklakhi mausoleum* as the proto-type. But stone was not altogether given up. Stone pillars have been invariably used, and in some monuments we also meet with stone facings of brick walls to some height. However, the decorations were all wrought in terracotta. During the Husain Shahi period the stone cutter's art is again revived. We meet here some edifices that have their brick walls faced with stones, both inside and outside, and only arches, roof and domes built of brick and plaster. Some of these stones were obtained from older structures, but the larger number were no doubt quarried from the Rajmahal hills. The other important feature is the re-introduction of the stone carving—an art which had been given up in the earlier period. This recreation of the stone cutter's art is poor in quality. It seems that a necessity was felt at this time to use a more lasting material than brick, and plenty of resources made it possible to quarry fresh stones from the hills. This necessity is the only likely motive for the use of stones at this time. The art is merely imitative, the designs of the terracotta being carved on stone. This is the last efflorescence of the stone-cutter's art in Bengal.

(1) *Bara Sona Masjid*

The name *Bara Sona Masjid* (Large Golden Mosque) is derived from the gilding that once adorned its domes. Abid Ali records another name 'Baradwari', and adds, "The common name of the building is 'Baradwari', or lietrally a building of twelve doors; but as there are eleven openings in front, considerable controversy has

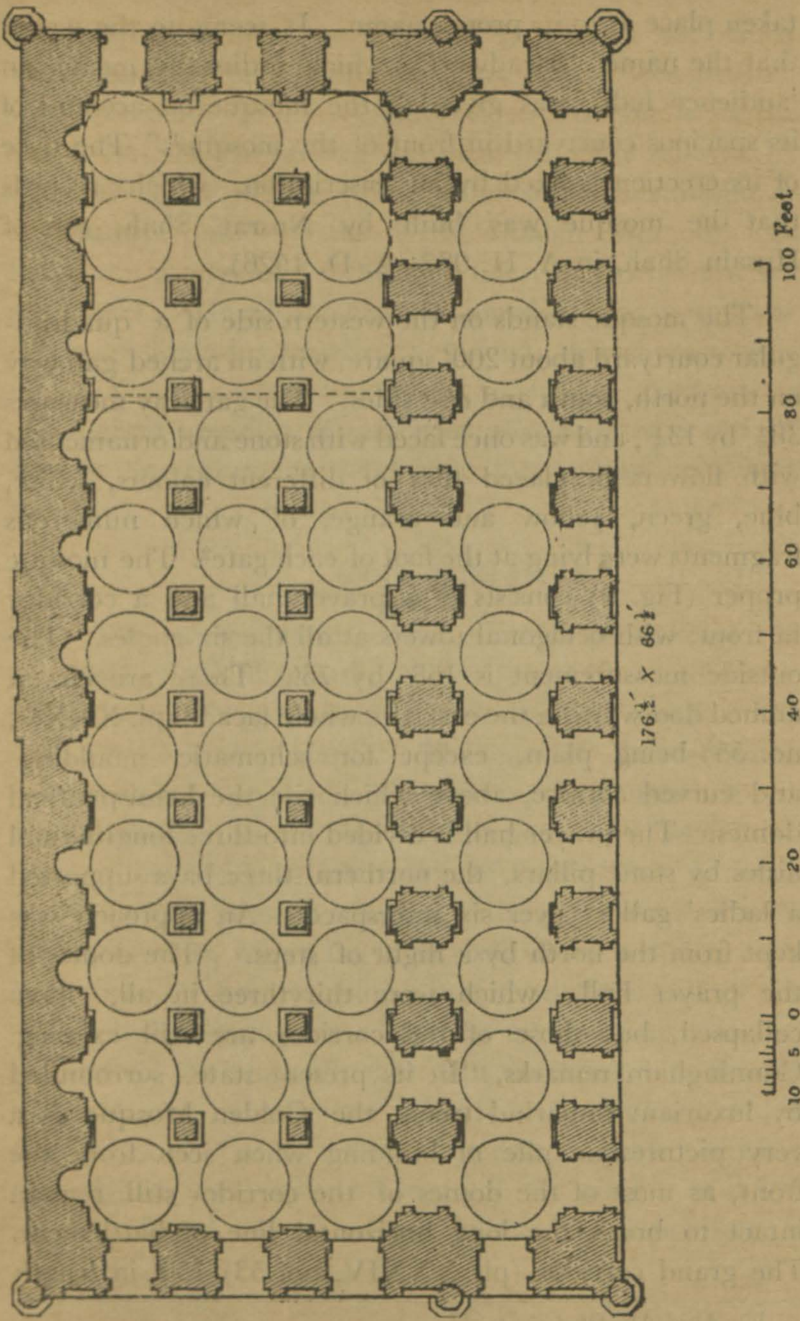


Fig. 9

taken place as to its proper name. It seems to the writer that the name 'Baradwari', which ordinarily means an 'audience hall', was given to the mosque on account of its spacious courtyard in front of the mosque[1]." The date of its erection is fixed by an inscription, which records that the mosque was built by Nusrat Shah, son of Husain Shah, in A. H. 932 (A. D. 1526).

The mosque stands on the western side of a quadrangular courtyard about 200′ square, with an arched gateway on the north, south and east sides. The gateway measures $38\frac{1}{2}'$ by $13\frac{1}{2}'$, and was once faced with stone and ornamented with flowers in glazed tiles of different colours, white, blue, green, yellow and orange, of which numerous fragments were lying at the foot of each gate[2]. The mosque proper (Fig. 9) consists of a prayer hall and a corridor in front, with octagonal towers at all the six angles. The outside measurement is 168′ by 76′. There are eleven arched doorways on the east, the whole facade (pl. XXXV, no. 55) being plain, except for schematic mouldings and curved cornice, above which rise the hemispherical domes. The prayer hall is divided into three longitudinal aisles by stone pillars, the northern three bays supported a ladies' gallery over six interspaces. An approach was kept from the north by a flight of steps. The domes of the prayer hall, which were thirythree in all, have collapsed, but those of the corridor are still existing. Cunningham remarks, "In its present state, surrounded by luxuriant tamarind trees, the Golden Mosque is a very picturesque pile of building when seen from the front, as most of the domes of the corridor still remain intact to break the long horizontal line of battlement. The grand corridor (pl. XXXIV, no. 53) 150′ in length

1. Abid Ali, *Op. Cit.*, p. 47.
2. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 69.

is perhaps the finest part of the interior, as the dimly lighted aisles of the mosque must always have been gloomy, more especially in the evening when the sun is in the west. But the sombreness was most probably relieved by a liberal use of gilding, which obtained for this masjid its well-known name of the Great Golden Mosque[1]. To Fergusson it appeared to be "the finest memorial now left at Gaur"[2]. He adds, "From its massive solidity and size this is an imposing building ; indeed this characteristic of the Gaur architecture forms a striking contrast to the lighter arcades of much of the Saracenic style[3]." But its barrenness of the facade has nothing to relieve the eye.

(2) *Gunmant Masjid*

The mosque stands near the village of Mahdipur on the bank of the Bhagirathi or old Ganges, just half a mile to the south of the citadel, and less than half a mile to the west of the *Lattan Masjid.* The date of its erection is not definitely known. The inscription, ascribed by Cunningham, can not be relied upon. He writes :— "Now there is a long inscription of Fateh Shah, dated in A. H. 889, at present lying in Mahdipur outside a temporary mosque, with a thatched roof, which is said to have been brought from a ruined masjid to the south of the village by a Hindu about 20 years ago. As his son died soon after, the man thought that the stone had brought bad luck, and therefore got rid of it by depositing it at the thatched masjid of his village. It seems probable therefore that this slab may have belonged to the masjid, as it was actually found not far from it[4]." The conclusion of

1. Cunningham, *Op. Cit*, P. 69.
2. Fergusson : op. cit. Vol. II, p. 257.
3. Ibid, pp. 257.
4. Cunningham, op. cit. p. 65.

Cunningham cannot be accepted on its face value. We have to examine more closely the details of the mosque. S. K. Sarasvati observes : "It should be pointed out, however, that this mosque agrees in all essential respects with the great *Adina mosque* at Hazrat Panduah, more than a century earlier in date. There is no certainty that the inscription, referred to, did belong to the mosque in question and in view of the fact the building has distinct affinities with an earlier group, the inference that it is also nearer to it in date may not be improbable."[1]

What are these affinities ? Sarasvati replies, "The *Gunmant mosque* at Gaur is another example of the type of oblong mosque with a central nave covered by an elongated vault, flanked by two side-wings roofed by clusters of semi-circular domes."[2] According to this description the ground plan of the *Gunmant mosque* resembles that of the western wing of the *Adina masjid.* Does this amount that both of them should be built near about the same time? Can the idea of plan not continue in the other periods? It has been shown in the cae of *Darasbari,*[3] and it will also be shown in the examples of *Chhota Sona Masjid*[4] and *Sath Gumbad Mosque*[5] at Bagerhat that the ground plan of the prayer chamber at the *Adina Mosque* continued to be followed in different periods. As far as the barrel vault is concerned, it exists even in the *Jami mosque*[6] of Old Maldah, built in 1004 A. H. (A. D. 1596). Therefore the dating of Sarasvati is also far from truth. Let us study the monument in detail.

The oblong mosque which measures 157′ by 59′ externally has octagonal towers (the bases are still in

1. S. K. Sarasvati, Op. cit., p. 18.
2. *Ibid*, pp. 18.
3. See chapter VI.
4. See below.
5. See next chapter.
6. See pl. LV. No. 80.

situ) at the four corners and pilaster minarets flanking the central door-way on the east. All the facing stones have been removed, and many of them have been utilised at the *Chhota Sona Masjid* during the repairs of 1912.[1] The cornice stone has also disappeared but the curvature of the battlements can still be seen. The mosque internally falls into three sections,—the middle one is roofed over with a ribbed barrel vault resting on massive octagonal stone piers. It has an arched window opening on the east, above the curved battlement, in order to allow light inside the vault and thus bring to clear view the profusely decorated terracotta work in the interior of the brick vault as well as the imitation of this work on stone (pl. XXXIV, No. 54). Each of the side wings is divided into three longitudinal aisles by stone pillars and roofed over with nine hemispherical domes.[2] About the decoration Cunningham writes, "Apparently the back and side walls, as well as the front wall above the spring of the arches, were all faced with glazed tiles, as I found numerous fragments of different colours lying at the foot of the wall, while several large pieces of battlement in dark blue and white tiles were found in the village of Mahdipur.[3]

The main features of the mosque may now be analysed :—(i) octagonal towers at the corners (ii)

1. The information is obtained from Syed Erfan Ali, ex-Conservation Assistant in-charge of the repairs. It is also recorded in the Office file of the Archaeological Survey of India, Eastern Circle, Calcutta.
2. My description differs from that of Cunningham. He says nothing about the corner towers, and does not show them in the plan given by him. There is no possibility of a corridor in front. The measurement, that I have followed are those of Stapleton, see Abid Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, P. 86, foot none 1.
3. Cunningham, *Op. Cit.* p. 66.

curved battlements. (iii) highly decorated terracotta art. (iv) terracotta imitation in stone. (v) Profusion of glazed tiles and (vi) stone facing of the walls. These are the characteristics neither of the earlier nor of the later Ilyas Shahi period. They definitely represent those of the Husain Shahi age. Therefore I feel no hesitation in ascribing the mosque to this period.

(3) *Chhota Sona Masjid.*

The name, *Chhota Sona Masjid*, is given by the local people in contrast to the *Bara Sona Masjid* (Large Golden Mosque). Cunningham further observes :— "It received its present name of the 'Little Golden Mosque' from the quantity of gilding employed in its ornamentation, of which some still remains to justify the popular appellation. Creighton first noticed it, and I verified his statement myself by inspecting some remains of gilding, found by my servants".[1] An inscription tablet hung up over the central doorway of the mosque states that it was erected by Wali Muhammad, son of Ali, during the reign of Alauddin Husain Shah (A. D. 1493-1519). The letter giving the exact year of construction is chipped off.

The oblong building of the mosque (fig. 10) measures 82′ long by 52′ broad, and has octagonal towers at the four corners. The facade is richly decorated, all the designs being carved on stone. The eastern side (pl. XXXVIII No. 58) shows five arched doorways, the arches having multiple cusps and their spandrels embossed with prominent rosettes. Each of the door is enclosed within a rectangular frame decorated with scroll work, the only variation being in the middle one (pl. XXXVI, No. 56) which depicts ornamented panels along its vertical sides, and the top is crowned with inscriptional tablet. The

1. *Ibid*, pp. 73-44.

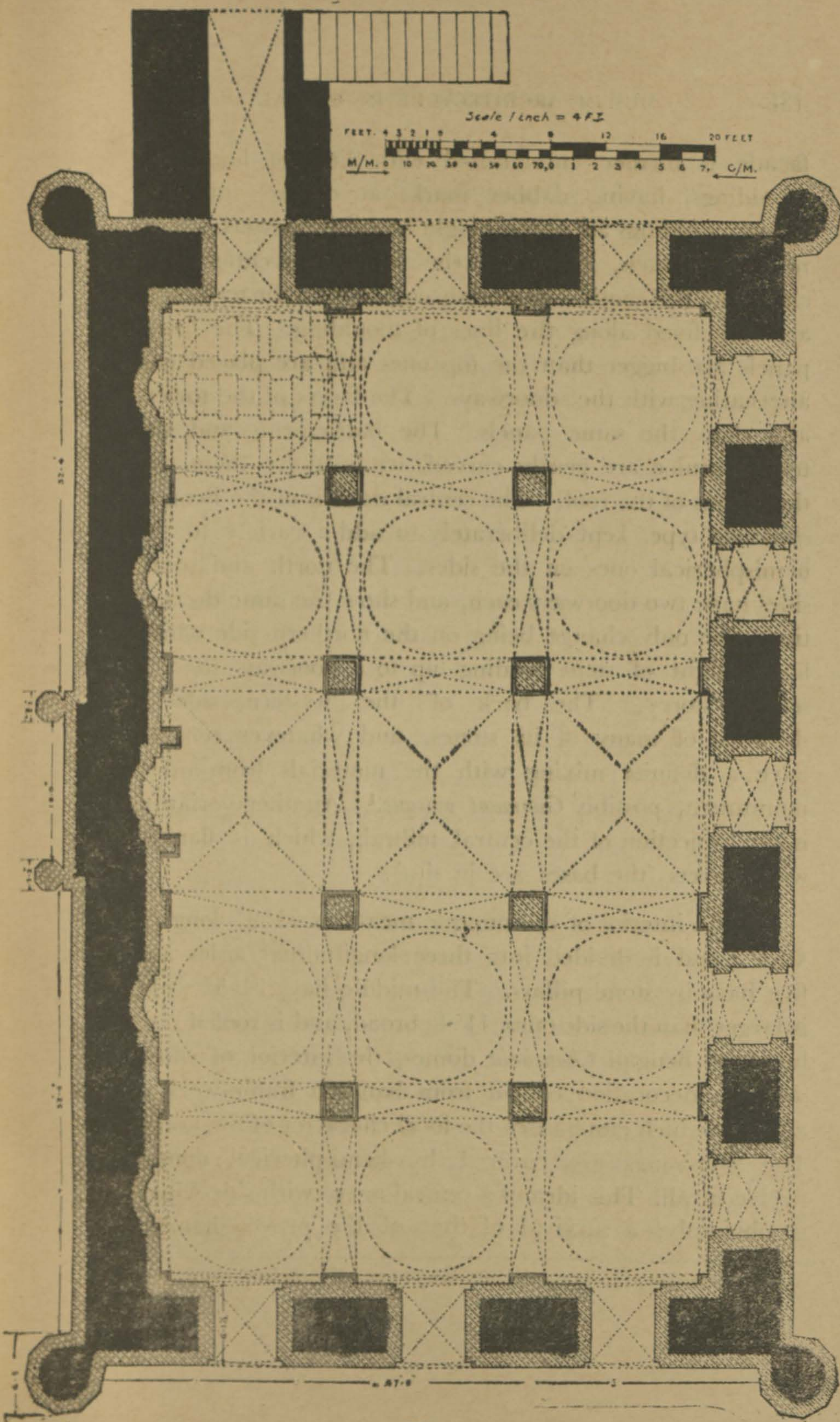

Scale 1 inch = 4 FT.
FEET. 4 3 2 1 0 4 8 12 16 20 FEET
M/M. 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 C/M.

Fig. 10

facade is further embellished with lines of horizontal mouldings, having dabber marks at regular intervals. These mouldings are carried right round the towers. Two rows of panels, depicting the same conventionalised chain and bell motif— obviously copied from the terracotta art—are fixed along the lines of moulding. The lower panels are bigger than the top ones and are placed one alternating with the doorways. The facets of the towers also show the same panels. The battlements and the triple cornice are gently curved, while above them rise the domes of the roof. The central done is of the Bengali *chauchala* type, kept deliberately to add a variety to the hemispherical ones on the sides. The north and south sides have two doorways each, and show the same decorations, the only change being on the northern side which has a flight of steps leading up to a doorway in the second storey. The back of the western side is denuded of many of its stones, and whatever remain, have a definite mixing with the materials from other monument, possibly *Gunmant mosque*.[1] Another variation is the projection of the central mihrab, which is flanked with turrets (the bases are in situ).

The interior of the mosque measures 71′ 9″ long by 40′ 6″, and is divided into three longitudinal aisles and five bays by stone pillars. The middle bay, 14′ 5″ wide, is larger than the side ones, 11′ 4″ broad, and is roofed over by three Bengali *Chauchala* domes, the interior of which shows a decoration copied from bamboo frame-work,—a design which emphasises the local character of the dome. The side-wings are covered by hemispherical domes, twelve in all. This idea of a central nave with side-wings, is obviously, a survival of that of the prayer-chamber

1. Compare, for example, the lower row of panels with the top row.

at the *Adina Mosque*. At the north western corner one inter-space is reserved for the ladies' gallery, which stood at the second storey, supported below on stone pillars. The entrance is from the north side by a flight of steps, already noticed. In the western wall are five mihrabs, opposite the front doorways, and an extra small mihrab in the second storey for the ladies. Unfortunately many of the decorative stones have been removed.[1] The mihrab (pl. XXXVII, No. 57) originally consisted of a deep alcove, fronted with an arched niche carried on carved pillars. Within the alcove a hanging motif is carved in the middle, besides other small panels depicting the 'chain and bell' motif. This whole composition is bordered within a frame ornamented with scroll work. The top side shows further moulding crowned with unidentifiable blind merlons on either side of a centrally placed '*Kalasa*' motif.

In front of the central mihrab, 6′ square space is overlaid with octagonal encaustic tiles. The mosque has an open court and an arched gateway, completely stripped of its stones. Further ahead are two unknown graves.

A note on the decoration of the panel may also be added. A niche, with cusped arch carried on coventionalised pillars, is the nucleus. From the apex of the arch hangs down a chain, and also alongside it strings of bead ending in a curved billet. From the chain is suspended a bell, hardly recognisable. Above the billets is a floral design and at the four corners a rosette. The spandrels of the arch have a tree-motif, inter-twining a rosette within its branches. The triforium of the arch consists of a flower, above which rises tiers of moulding. The entire composition is bordered within a frame

1. Abid Ali records that one such niche is in a Museum in England. *Op. Cit.*, p. 82.

decorated with scroll work of inferior workmanship. The top side has further carved bands, crowned with blind merlons on either side of the centrally placed *Kalasa* motif. Over the panel is generally noticed a large prominent rosette.

Such are the design and profuse decorations of the *Chhota Sona Masjid.* It is the best representation of the stone cutter's art of the Husain Shahi period. However, it cannot stand comparison with the buildings of the earlier period. In design as well as in decoration it is only an imitation.

Conclusion:—In the above pages the important monuments of Gaur have been described. All these were erected during the period of the Independent Sultans of Gaur. The buildings of the Mughal period will be described in a subsequent chapter. The monuments of Gaur not merely speak of the grandeur that once belonged to this capital city, but also provide a continuous link in the development of the Muslim architecture from about the middle of the 15th century to the middle of the 17th century. It is only here that we can trace the gradual evolution of the Muslim architecture in Bengal. It is the influence of Gaur that created other buildings in Bengal. In the subsequent chapters this influence will be traced region-wise and attempt will be made to particularize other features that dominated the style of different regions. In this particular aspect the monuments erected in and near Khalifatabad (modern Bagerhat) are the most important. We now turn to them.

CHAPTER VIII

THE KHAN JAHAN STYLE

1. *Introduction:-* Khan Jahan flourished at Bagerhat (in Khulna District) in the middle of fifteenth century A. D., when Nasiruddin Mahmud I, the founder of the Second Ilyas Shahi Dynasty, was ruling at Gaur. The only historical information, known about Khan Jahan, is derived from the inscription engraved upon his tomb. The inscription reads :—

"The great (Ulagh) Khan Jahan (peace and blessings be on him), a helpless slave, who is needy of the mercy and the blessing of the Nourisher of both the worlds (God), who is a lover of the descendants of the Leader of the Prophets (Muhammad), who is sincere towards the pious scholars (Ulama), who is an enemy of the non-believers and infidels, and who is a helper of Islam and Muslims, left this worldly abode for the eternal one (i.e. died) in the night of Wednesday, the 26th of Zil Hijjah, and was buried on Thursday, the 27th of the same month in the year 863 (i.e. 23rd October, A.D. 1459)". At other place the following is recorded :—

"This is the blessed tomb (Rawza), out of the gardens of the paradise, of Khan-al-Azam (great Khan) Khan Jahan (peace and blessings be on him). Written on the 26th of Zil Hijjah, the year 863 (i.e. A. D. 1459)"[1].

The titles, *Ulagh* and *Khan-al-Azam*, of Khan Jahan suggest that he was not an independent free lancer but that he owned fealty most probably to Gaur Sultan[2].

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1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1867, p. 135.
2. See J. N. Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 131.

But local tradition connects him with Delhi. Babu Gourdas Bysack records "about that time one Khan Jahan *alias* Khanja Ally, a chief of great piety and liberality, who was rusticated from the court of Delhi, was sent to this place to hold the post of a tehsildar"[1], and speaking about a nearby tomb he adds, "it was built by a zealot, one Mohammed Taer (Tahir) *alias* Pir Ally by name, whose religious fervour forced the conversion of many a Hindu to the Mahomedan faith. Himself a renegade from the religion of his Hindu forefathers, he acquired a high reputation for sanctity, and maintained it by a strict observance of the ordinances of his adopted religion. According to tradition he was sent for to Delhi, and for some reason or other, there beheaded by order of the emperor"[2]. Whatever be the truth in this tradition, it is certain that the Delhi emperor, circumstanced as he was, could not have thought of interfering in the affairs of Bengal. However, Khan Jahan who might have been an officer of the Gaur Sultan betrays in his buildings an affectation for the Tughlaq architecture of Delhi, and this particular feature may lead in future to the discovery of his origin. Meanwhile the monuments, which show these characteristics, are described below.

(1) *Tomb of Khan Jahan* (*pl. XXXIX*, *No.* 59)

The brick-built tomb stands within a walled compound, entered through arched gateways. It is a single-domed square building, measuring 45′ each side, with towers at the four corners. On each of the east, south and west sides, it has a doorway, fitted with stone lintels, above which spring pointed arches. The whole facade

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1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XXXVI, pt. 1, 1867. p. 127.
2. *Ibid.* pp. 131-32.

is now plain without any plaster. But Bysack writes :—"The plastering of the building has peeled off in many places, but from what remains it is evident that the builder was perfectly familiar with the art by which the masons of Delhi of that time gave a marble-like smoothness and polish to chunam work.[1]" I am very doubtful about the original application of this plaster, because none of the other buildings of Khan Jahan has preserved any trace of it. If at all it existed in this tomb at the time of Bysack, the only conclusion possible is that the plaster was applied later during the Mughal period, as in the neighbourhood we do get the remains of Mughal buildings, and secondly because such a fine-polished plaster was developed only during the Mughal period at Agra and Delhi. At the same time we should note that no terracotta art is displayed in these buildings. The corner towers are cirular, divided by fine bands of mouldings, while the battlements and cornice gently curve, above which rises the hemispherical dome. The iron spike, jutting out over the dome, proves the original existence of a finial. The interior of the tomb is also a square with no stone pillars. In their place stone brackets have been used in order to support the squinches that make up the 'phase of transition'. On the floor lies the cenotaph, which has lost its original decoration. But Bysack records : "The steps round the grave are inlaid with encaustic tiles of various colours, the richness of which has withstood the wear and tear of four hundred years without any serious damage. Some of the tiles are hexagons, 4 inches across, while others are squares of 6½" each side. The substance of the latter is a white stone ware, and the enamelling on it is of a character which makes me suspect these tiles to have been imported from China. The former are of red earth, and the glazing

1. *Ibid.* p. 130.

and designs on them are of inferior execution. Their counterparts are commonly met with in Pathan buildings in Gaur and elsewhere.[1]"

The tomb, in its arch and lintel construction, recalls the Firuzian type of Delhi, and in its stark simplicity has again something of the bareness that is associated with Tughlaq architecture. The other features are typically local. There is also a single-domed square mosque, attached to the tomb, depicting the same style.

(2) *Sath-Gumbad Mosque at Bagerhat*

(Pl XL. Nos. 60 & 61.)

Three miles to the south-west of Khan Jahan's tomb, there is a magnificent mosque, commonly known by the name of *Sath-Gumbad Masjid*, or the Mosque of Sixty Domes, but this term is a misnomer, as the actual number of domes over the roof is seventy-seven. The date of its erection is not known, but tradition ascribes it to Khan Jahan, and the style confirms it.

It is the biggest mosque in East Pakistan, with its outside dimension (Fig. 11) being 160′ long by 108′ wide, and its frontage consists of a row of eleven arched doorways while each of the sides have seven. It has four corner towers, circular in section and built in two stages. They are massive and tapering, and topped over with cupolas still *in situ*, while the front two contain spiral staircase within, leading up to an open arched chamber. The long facade has little to afford relief to the eye. The usual curved battlements and cornice are, no doubt, met here as well ; besides, on the eastern side over the central arched doorway, which is larger than others, is

1. *Ibid.* p. 130

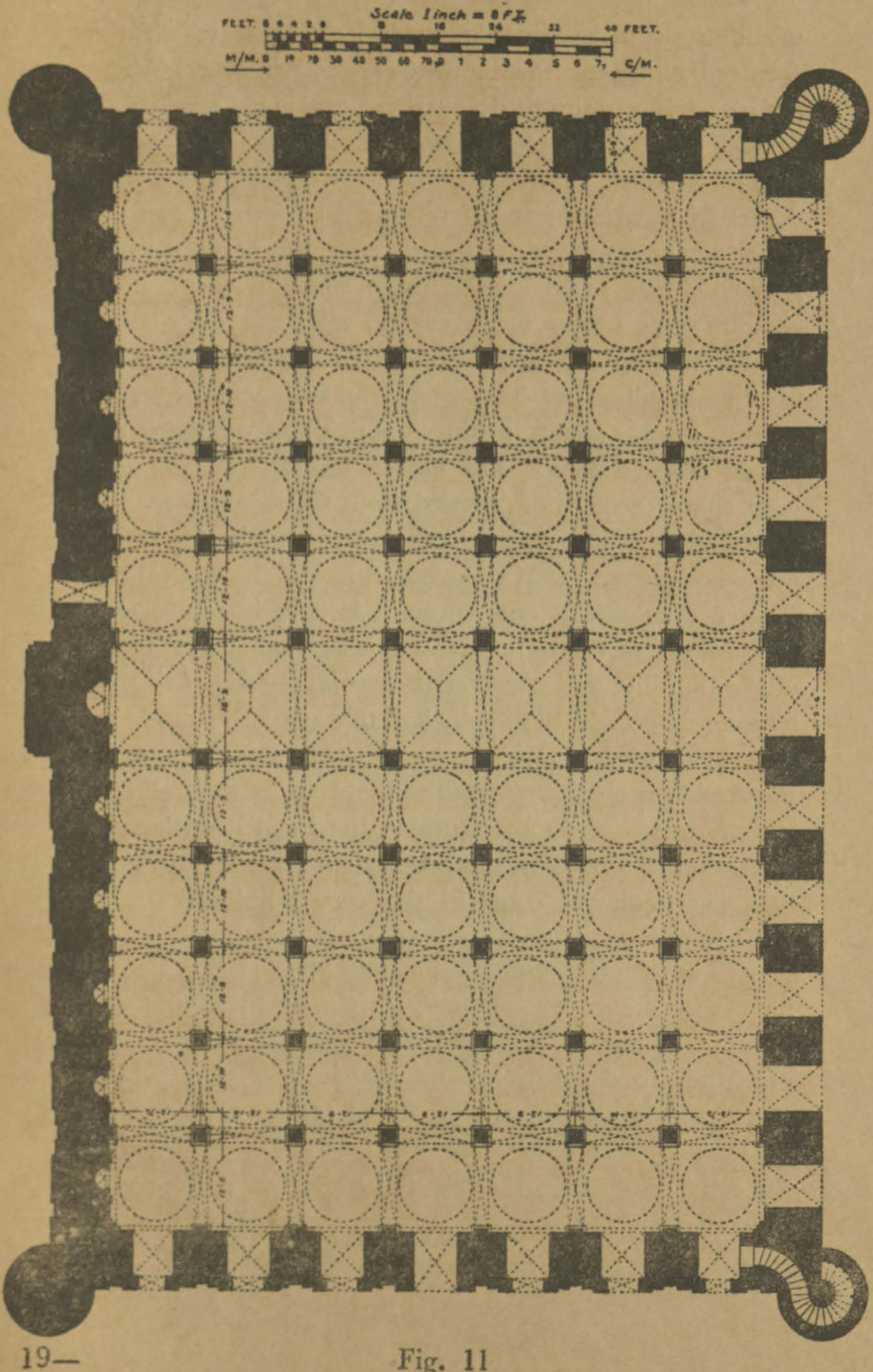


Fig. 11

peculiarly seen a tringular pediment, from which the cornice bands slope down towards the corner towers. The pediment is a unique decoration, and may have been derived from the gable ends of the *Do-Chala* hut roof of Bengal. Above, on the roof rise rows of hemispherical domes with variation in the middle, where the domes are of the Bengali *Chauchala* type. The interior of the mosque is divided into seven longitudinal aisles and eleven deep bays by stone (and a few masonry) pillars. The rows of endless diminishing arches (pl. XL, No. 61) springing from these pillars present a wonderful spectacle, while the seventy-seven domes resting upon them embrace the widest covered area. The eleven mihrabs on the west with sparse decoration, copied from Gaur style, are lost in the gloomy atmosphere and are apt to be forgotten. But when one stands at the western end of the central bay (larger than others and covered as stated before, with *Chauchala* type domes) he can at once realise the dignity of the building and consider it more as a *darbar hall* than a mosque, — a closed gloomy hall that could be produced only in the deltaic Bengal and nowhere else. Such an impression is obtained from the character of the building, and there may be some truth in the local tradition that the proud conqueror of this Sundarban area, Khan Jahan, held his occasional court in this very building.[1]

The interior plan of the mosque—a wide central nave with side wings—follows a style that was first seen in prayer-chamber at the *Adina Mosque*. The curved cornice, mihrab decorations and massiveness of the brick structure without the application of plaster on side-walls are the features that are shared with other Bengali mosques. But the numberless domes supported on arcaded

1. *Bengal District Gazetteers, Khulna, (Calcutta,* 1908), pp. 168-69

aisles recall the *Khirki* and *Kalan masjids*[1] of Delhi, that were erected during the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq. The tapering corner circular towers, very prominent in the Tughlaq architecture of Delhi, prove beyond doubt that the idea of such a mosque as well as some of its features must have been derived from the Tughlaq style. It is well worth noting that this style survived in Bengal more than half a century after it had become obsolete in Delhi.

(3) *Masjidkur Mosque.*
(pl. XLI, No. 63)

Masjidkur is a village in the Khulna division, situated on the Kabadak river, six miles south of Chandkhali. The village derives its name from the fact that when the pioneers of cultivation in the Sundarbans were clearing jungle here, they came upon an old mosque close to the river bank and therefore called the place Masjidkur, i.e. the digging out of the mosque[2]. Sir James Westland describes : "The building thus found proclaims at the first glance that it owes its origin to the same hand which built the Satgumbaz. The principle of structure is the same, only instead of a breadth of eleven domes and a depth of seven, we have here a breadth and depth of three domes only, or nine in all. There are the same massive walls, for they are about six feet thick; a large central doorway is beneath the middle dome on each side, and two smaller doorways on each face, one on each side of the central one. But the building itself appears to the eye of so massive a structure, that the doorways seem dwarfed out of all proportion to the size of the face. As

1. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture* (The Islamic Pariod). pls. XII and XV.
2. *Bengal District Gazetteer, Khulna*, p. 183.

in the Satgumbaz, so here also there are four towers (circular in section) at the four corners of the building, but none of them appear to be asendible, and the walls show in several places the same little circlets traced on the face of the brick which are used to ornament the large structure near Bagherhat (Bagerhat)[1]."

(4) *Qasba Mosque in Bakerganj District.*

Qasba is an old village in thana Gaurnadi. It contains a mosque, situated on the western side of an ancient road said to have been constructed by Sabi Khan in early 16th century A.D. But this mosque resembles that at Masjidkur in all respects. This oblong building, having circular towers at the four corners, is roofed over with nine domes in three rows, resting below on stone pillars[2]. Its affinity with Khan Jahan's buildings suggests that it was also erected during his time i. e. in the middle of 15th century A.D.

(5). *Masjidbari Mosque in Bakerganj district*

(Pl. XLII No. 64)

The *Masjidbari Mosque* is an exception in this region, and is built in another design. It consists of a single-domed square room with a vaulted front verandah and octagonal towers at the angles (Fig. 12). But its dwarfish three arched doorways on the east and blank walls, without any decoration, keep up the tradition of Khan Jahan's building (Fig.13). The difference is due to its builder, about whom we learn from an inscription : "This mosque was built in the reign of the Sultan, the mighty

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1. J. Westland, *A Report on the District of Jessore* (Calcutta, 1871) pp. 20-21.
2. Bengal District Gazetteer, Bakerganj (Calcutta, 1918) p. 148. S. K. Sarasvati, *Op. cit.* P.26.

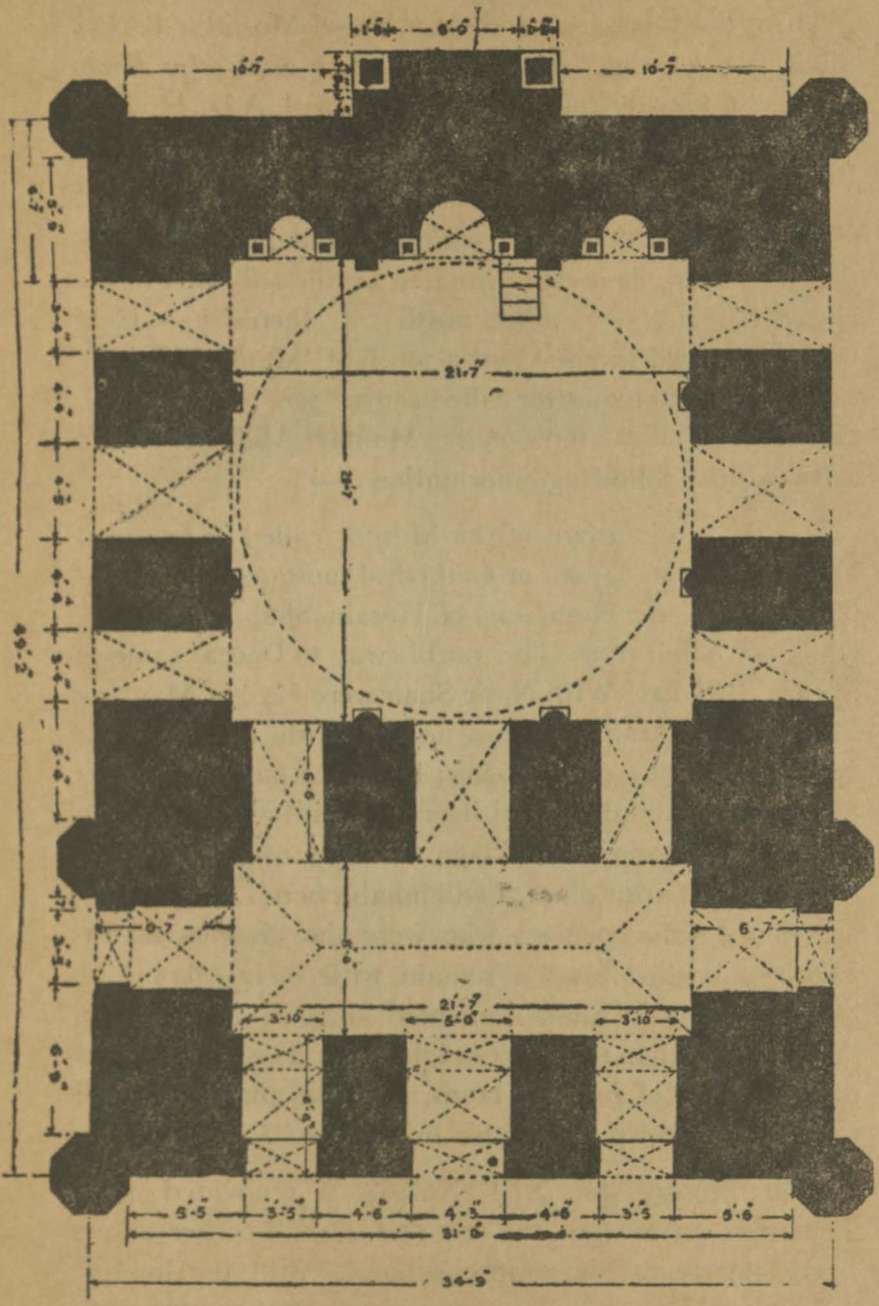


Fig 12

pillar of the Church and state, Aboo-al-Mozaffar Barbak Shah, son of the Sultan Mohammad Shah, by Khan Moazzam Ozyal Khan, year of Hijira 870 (A.D. 1465).[1]"

(6) *Sailkupa Mosque*

The Mauza Sailkupa, within Jhenidah sub-division, district Jessore, is prettily situated on the left bank of the river Kumar, ten miles north of Jhenidah. Here we have an old mosque and a tomb of 'Maulana Sahib,' both situated in a quarter called *Dargah-para* or *Masjidpara*. On the basis of a later *dastaviz*, Maulavi Abdul Wali has supplied the following information :—

"As to the origin of the Masjid (called in Imperial Farmans *Masjid-i-Jami* or Cathedral mosque), it is stated that King Nasir Shah, son of Husain Shah, of Bengal, while travelling from Gaur on his way to Dacca came to Mauza Sailkupa. With Nasir Shah were Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Arab, a renowned Darvish and *Murshid* (spiritual guide) of the king; Hakim Khan, a pathan; Saiyid Shah Abdul Qadir-i-Baghdadi, and a Faqir. The Maulana on seeing the village was very much delighted and said 'I like this place, I will inhabit here'. The above mentioned three persons who were the disciples of the Maulana wished also to remain with their *Murshid* at Sailkupa. Nasir Shah consented to this, and left his Wazir Shah Ali in the service of the *Pir*. The king granted a few Bighas of *Lakhiraj* lands, and was pleased to call the Mauza Nasirpur after his own name."[2]

The Mosque (pl. XLI, No. 62) is renovated now. The main entrance on the east and the tall corner towers speak clearly of the restorer's hand. Still the mosque

1. *Bengal District Gazetteer, Bakerganj*, pp. 151-52.
2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1901, pp. 15-28.

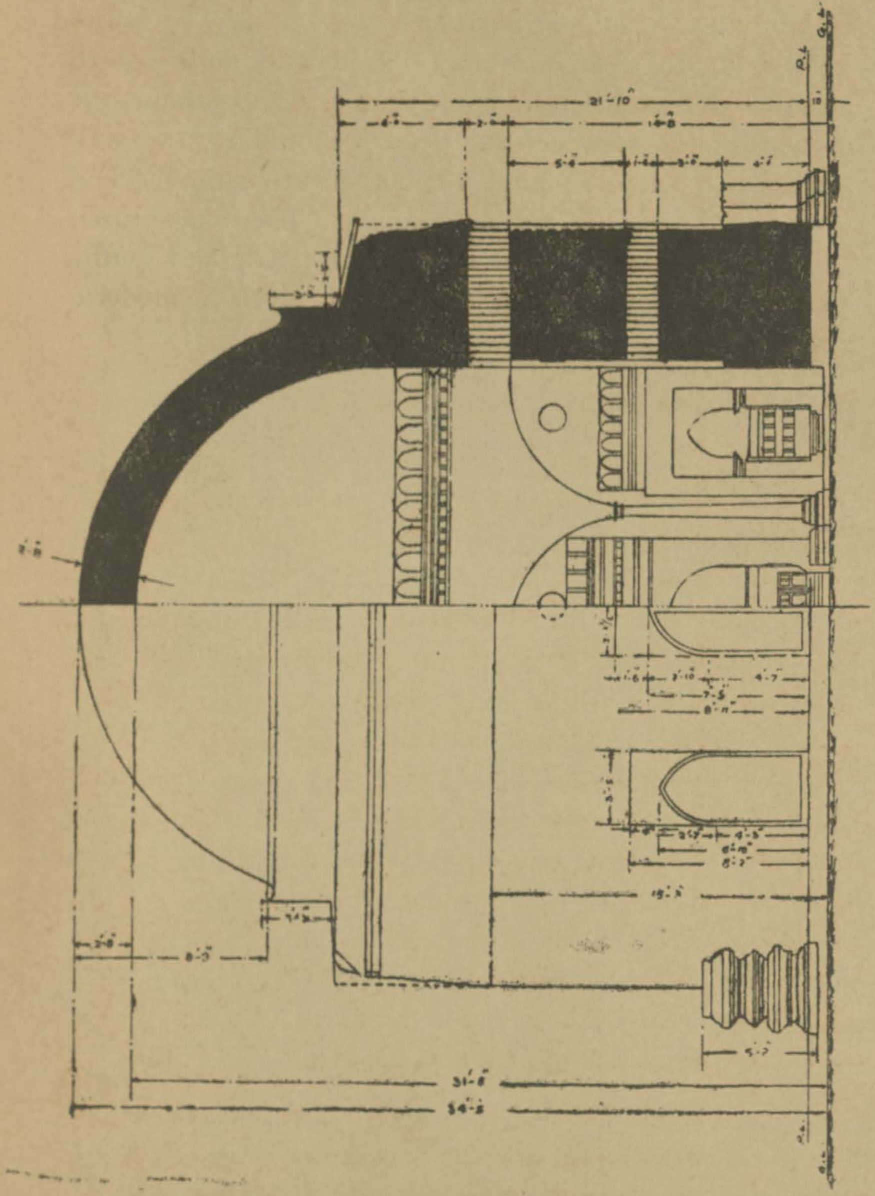


Fig. 13

retains enough of the old features. It is built of bricks but the surface is bare, as is to be found in the other mosques of Khulna district. It measures 31½′ by 21′, with wall 5¼′ thick. In style it compares well with multi-domed mosques of South Bengal in the time of Khan Jahan—the corner towers show several tiers of moulding, the wall surface is absolutely plain, the parapets are curved. The roof is covered by six low domes. There are three entrances on the east and two on the north and south. The middle entrance on the east is given a modern appearance.

CHAPTER IX

REGIONAL STYLES

1. Introduction : Gaur (including Pandua), being the pre-Mughal capital of Bengal, was adorned with magnificent buildings by successive rulers, and there the Bengali architecture developed through its various building phases. Different styles were in vogue in different periods. From the capital issued forth military commanders, district officers and men of other ranks and professions, who carried with them the familiar building traditions. There was also the other way traffic from various parts of the kingdom to the capital. All these resulted in the dissemination of the ideas, practices, fashions and styles that were favoured by the elite at Gaur. Therefore the buildings, that we meet with in other parts of Bengal, naturally betray, more or less, some affinity with the monuments at the capital, excepting for minor diff-erences which may be due either to the locality or to the want of skilled craftsmen. If a thorough study is made, we can assign them to various classified periods. Only one group of monuments, mainly confined in the districts of Bakerganj, Khulna and Jessore, forms a distinct class by themselves (already described in chapter VIII). But sometimes it is difficult to be exact. However, the buildings in different parts of Bengal very often show particular features of their own. It is mainly to study these features that these buildings are dealt with in this separate chapter.

2. Second Ilyas Shahi Period : The existing monuments, so far recorded, date from the time of the Second Ilyas Shahi rulers. A few examples are here noted :—

(1) Old mosque at Molla Simla, date

uncertain, and the smaller mosque of Chhota Pandua, dated 882 A.H. (A.D. 1477)—both in the Hooghly district —are single domed square buildings. (2) The Gopalganj mosque in Dinajpur district, erected in 865 A.H. (A.D. 1460) has a single-domed square prayer-hall with a front verandah. (3) Majlis Saheb's mosque at Kalna in Burdwan disdrict, date uncertain, Salik mosque at Bashirhat in the district of Twenty-four parganas, dated 871 A.H. (A.D. 1466-67) and Baba Adam's mosque at Rampal in Dacca district, dated 888 A.H. (A.D. 1483), are multi-domed oblong buildings.[1] Out of these the last mosque is described below :—

3. Baba Adam's Mosque at Rampal :

The mosque is known after a locally famous saint Baba Adam, who lies buried in a simple grave nearby. Nothing historical is known about him. Dr. Wise, however, records the following tradition :—

"Baba Adam was a very powerful Darwesh, who came to this part of the country with an army during the reign of Ballal Sen. Having encamped his army near Abdullapur, a village about 3 miles to the north-east, he caused pieces of cows' flesh to be thrown within the walls of the Hindu Prince's fortress. Ballal Sen was very irate and sent messengers throughout the country to find out by whom the cow had been slaughtered. One of the messengers shortly returned and informed him that a foreign army was at hand, and that the leader was then praying within a few miles of the palace. Ballal Sen at once galloped to the spot, found Baba Adam still praying, and at one blow cut off his head."[2]

1. *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. IX, 1941, pp. 21-26; *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, new series, Vol. VI, 1910, pp. 26-29.
2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XLII, 1873, p. 285. *ibid*, 1889, pp. 12. ff.

The story, though affording a charm of romantic tale, is little better than a pure fiction devoid of any historical sense. But the mosque fortunately has an inscription, which records : "This Jami Masjid was built by the great Malik, Malik Kafur, in the time of the king, the son of the King, Jalal-ud-dunya wa-ud-din Fateh Shah the king, son of Mahmud Shah, the king in the middle of the month of Rajab 888 A.H. (August, A.D.

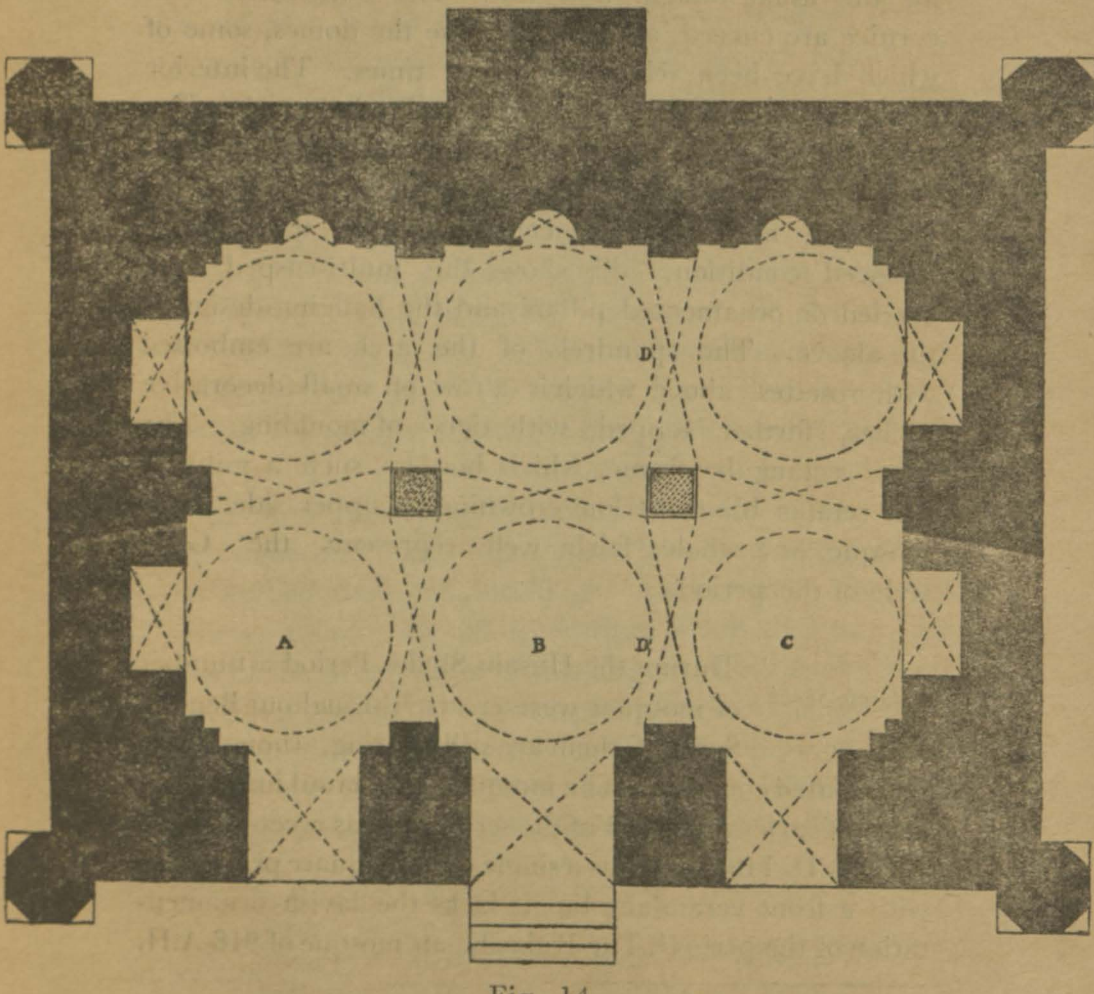


Fig. 14.

1483)"[1]. Fateh Shah was the last Ilyas Shahi ruler. The mosque has the usual oblong plan (Fig. 14), measuring 43′ long by 36′ broad, with octagonal towers at the four corners. The facade (pl.XLII, No. 65) has been renovated and the old decorations have disappeared, excepting for bands of moulding at the bottom and over the three arched doorways on the east. The doorways are separated by a panel showing an arched niche with a hanging chain for the usual design, now lost. The battlements and cornice are curved, above which rise the domes, some of which have been rebuilt in recent times. The interior of the hall is divided into two aisles and three bays by stone pillars. The north and south walls each contain deep rectangular niches, while in the west are three decorated mihrabs. The central mihrab, though in a renewed condition, still shows the multi-cusped arch carried on ornamented pillars and the hanging design in the alcove. The spandrels of the arch are embossed with rosettes, above which is a row of small decorative niches, further topped with tiers of moulding. The usual rectangular frame, which borders such a mihrab, still retains blind merlons crowning its upper side. The mosque, as a whole, fairly well represents the Gaur style of the period.

4 Husain Shahi Period :

During the Husain Shahi Period a number of mosques were erected throughout Bengal. Some of them are still existing, though in a dilapidated condition. The mosque at Kheraul in Murshidabad district is the first of the series. It was erected in 900 A.H.(A.D. 1494) and has a single domed square prayer hall with a front verandah; but it lacks the lavish ornamentation of the period[1]. The Rukn Khan mosque of 918 A.H.

1. *Ibid*, Vol. XLII, 1873, p. 284.

(A.D. 1512) follows the same plan[2]. A number of old single-domed square mosques are to be found in the locality of Sonargaon[3] and Rampal in Dacca district. Some of them have been ruined beyond repairs, while others, like the mosque near the tomb of Hazrat Shah Danishmand, originally built in 929 A. H. (A. D. 1522), have been rebuilt in recent times. However, one single-domed mosque at Bara Goali near Daud Kandi in Tippera district, dated 906 A. H. (A. D. 1500), is a replica of the Chhota Sona Masjid plan, while another multi-domed mosque at the Dargah of Shahzadpur,[4] date unknown, though renovated retains the panelled designs on the eastern facade. Some of these mosques are noticed here in detail.

5. Sankarpasa Mosque in Sylhet district

The mosque consists of a single domed square room, measuring 21′5″ each side, and a front verandah, 5′4″ in breadth, with octagonal towers at all the angles, six in all. It has now been much renovated (pl.XLIII, No. 66). The towers have been extended beyond the parapet for height but with loss of original design. The curved battlements have been straightened into horizontal parapets, while the dome which fell sometime back, has now been replaced with a flat arched roof, supported on iron joists. But the mosque retains its old decorations which give us a fair idea of the peculiarities of this locality. On the east there are three doorways, with cusped arches. The spandrels have lost their decorations, but above them tiers of moulding can still be seen. The ornamentation of the facade varies in arrangement from the contemporary Gaur style.

1. & 2. *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, new series, Vol. VI, 1910, p. 27.
3. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XLII, p. 187
4. *Ibid.*, Vol XXIII, 1904, pp. 266-67.

On the Eastern side we have, at the ends, three panels one above the other, over the doorways two in the same line, and between the doorways one large-sized panel above two normal sized ones in line. The chain-and-bell motif has here developed into a conventionalised floral design suspended from a chain-like branch of a tree (pl. XLIII, No. 67). The pillars supporting the cusped arch of the niche are changed into vertical row of decorations—rosettes alternating with framed four-petalled flowers. The spandrels show a crisp tree-motif, crowned with rosettes. Similarly the mihrab (pl. XLIV, No. 68) is profusely decorated, but in different style. Remarkable is the representation of actual bells suspended from chains on the brick pillars that carry the cusped arch. The spandrels show peculiar tree-motif with inter-twining branches ending in flowers. The rectangular frame, that usually borders a mihrab here shows decorations consisting of four or eight petalled flowers within small rectangles formed by intersection of wavy lines. All these details, no doubt, speak of the taste and likes of the local designers. The mosque, as a whole, betrays the lavish ornamentation of the Husain Shahi period.

6. Majlis Aulia Mosque at Pathrail in Faridpur District

The mosque is known after a great saint Majlis Abdulla Khan, better known as Majlis Aulia Saheb. In plan, it is oblong, measuring 84′ long by 41′ 6″ wide externally, with octagonal towers at the four corners. It has five arched entrances on the east, and the facade is richly decorated with panelled designs. The curvature of the battlements and cornice are very much emphasised. Above them rise the hemispherical domes, now covered with jungle-growth. The interior of the hall is divided into two aisles and five bays by brick-built pillars, which support ten domes on the roof. There are five highly

ornamented mihrabs in the west wall. The decoration of the mihrab adds many local varieties in floral patterns. The richness of its embellishment with convetionalised designs places it in the Husain Shahi period.

7. Bagha Mosque in Rajshahi District

Bagha, bout 25 miles south east of Rajshahi is now a desolate village full of ancient remains belonging to the saint Hazrat Maulana Shah Muzzam Daula and his descendants. In the vicinity of these ruins stands the ancient mosque within an enclosed compound, entered through two old arched gateways from the north and south, but the northern one is now renovated. The mosque was built in 930 A. H. (A. D. 1523) by Nusrat Shah, son of Husain Shah.[1]

It is a richly decorated brick built mosque, oblong in plan, measuring 75′ 8″ by 42′ 2″ wide, with octagonal towers at the four corners. The cupolas of the towers are still in situ. The eastern side (pl. XLVI, No. 70) has five arched doorways, each bordered within ornamented frame. Other decorations of the facade show the usual panels in two rows. The facets of the towers depict also the same panels. The battlemens and cornice are gently curved, above which rose ten domes, now collapsed. The interior is divided into two aisles and five bays by stone pillars. The western wall has three decorated mihrabs in the three southern bays, a panelled design in the fourth and smaller mihrab in the second storey of the fifth. The northern two arched doorways are closed with gratings, probably of a later period. It seems that there was originally a ladies' gallery at the north-west corner. The decoration of the mihrab fittingly illustrates the terracotta art of this period. The central mihrab

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1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LXXIII, 1904, p. 111.

(Pl. XLV, No. 69) shows a floreate frame round the mihrab niche, which opens through a cusped arch springing from decorated pillars, which are faceted in design. The spandrels of the arch are enriched with rupturous overgrowth of boughs and leaves inter-twining the central rosette. The space within the niche is further subdivided into number of decorated panels. The hanging motif (pl.XLVII, No. 72) in this building develops a fantastic pattern of a pendent with grape fruits and other jewels adorning the stem. One of the window grills (pl.XLVII No. 71) makes a fine juxtaposition of intersecting circles and diagonals.

8. *Masque at Navagram in Pabna District*: This mosque was built in 932 A.H. (A.D. 1526) during the reign of Nusrat Shah[1]. It is a single domed square building measuring 24′ each side internally with octagonal towers at the four corners. In its design and decoration it closely follows those of the *Lattan Masjid* and *Gumti Gate*. Like the latter, its towers are subdidivided into three sections by moulded bands, each section being decorated with rounded flutes. One arched entrance is kept on each of the north, south and east sides .The facade is relieved with projections and recesses. On the projection is carved a floreate design hanging from the apex of a cusped arch. The recesses contain panelled design in a row, four in the eastern side. The battlements and the decorated cornice are gently curved, above which rises the dome, now overgrown with jungle.

9. *Shahzadpur Mosque*: Shahzadpur is the head-quarter of a *thana* in Pabna district. It is famous for a superb mosque, the *mazars* of Makhdum Shah Daula Shahid, and other Muslims, and an annual fair.

1. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, 1937-38, pp. 37-38.

The traditions about the Makhdum Shah are noted by Maulvi Abdul Wali[1]. The mosque has the usual oblong plan with internal measurement, 51′9″ by 31′ 5″ and the wall 5′7″ thick. There are five entrances on the east and three each on the north and south. The roof is covered by fifteen domes, all supported on 28 pillars of black basalt (pl. XLVIII, No. 73). Inside the mosque we have a seven stepped pulpit. The mosque has been renovated in the Mughal period, and the original terracotta work is now lost, except the panelling on the eastern face. The date of its construction is not known. But whatever little can be gathered about its original style, suggests that it might have been built in the 15th century A.D.

10. Mosque at Sura in Dinajpur District : The stone works of the Husain Shahi period is not confined to the capital Gaur. We have such buildings still existing far away from the capital, but located only in North Bengal. The mosque at Sura (pl. XLIX, No. 74) is a typical example of this style. It is built of brick, with walls faced with stones to a considerable height. The stones depict panels and other designs similar to those at the *Chhota Sona Masjid.* On ground of style it must be dated to the Husain Shahi period.

The mosque (fig. 15) follows the plan of the *Lattan Masjid*, and consists of a square hall, 16′ each side, with a front corridor. At all the angles we have octagonal towers, six in all, and the cornice is curved as usual. There are three arched doorways on the east, one each on the north and south, and three decorated mihrabs on the west. A single dome, carried on squinches and also supported by pillars, covers the hall.

1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1904, pp. 262-71.

The mosque stands in a dense jungle about seven miles west of the ruins of Ghoraghat, a well-known police outpost.

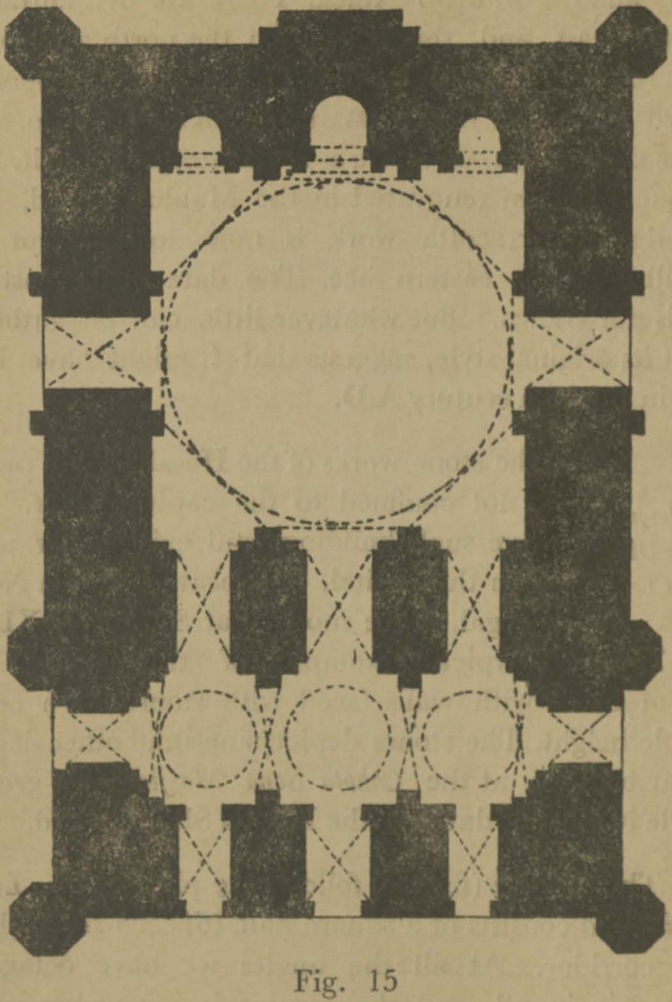


Fig. 15

11. Kusumba Mosque in Rajshahi District : When the Husain Shahi dynasty was ruling over Bengal, great changes were taking place in Upper India and beyond. Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar, the fugitive king of Ferghana in Central

Asia, had established himself at Kabul, grown in experience and military power, and begun to push towards Delhi. In A.D.1526, he defeated the Lodi king Ibrahim at the battle of Panipat, and ascended the throne of Delhi as the first Mughal emperor of India.

Nearer at hand in Behar a shrewd Afghan chieftain Sher Shah Sur was gathering more strength, and was at last fortunate enough to measure swords with Ghiasud-Din Mahmud(AD.1533-1538), the last ruler of the Husain Shahi dynasty. His army marched into Gaur on the 6th of April, 1538[1], and thus the independence of Bengal came to an end. Sher Shah established his rule only to raise problems for the Mughals. It was the beginning of a political upheaval that lasted for years till Bengal became a *subah* of the Mughal empire.

During these years of turmoil little cultural activity could be expected. In architecture we do not meet with any monument of importance. Whatever buildings were erected out of necessity, they only betray a poor imitation of the style developed during the Husain Shahi period. *Kusumba Mosque* is an example of this type. It was built by Sulaiman in 966 A. H. (A. D. 1558) during the reign of Ghiyasud-din Bahadur Shah[2] I. The mosque (pl. LI, No. 76) is built of brick faced with stone both inside and outside, except the arches, domes and roof. It has the usual oblong plan, measuring 58′ long by 42′ wide with octagonal corner towers, triple curved cornice and bands of horizontal mouldings on the facade. The eastern face (pl. LII No. 77) shows three multi-cusped arched doorways, each separated by double panels

1. J. N. Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p 164.
2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LXX, pt. I, 1904. p. 117. J. N. Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 180.

one above the other. The other sides show the same decoration, only the south has its two doorways fitted with gratings showing geometrical patterns. The interior is divided into two aisles and three bays by stone pillars, which supported six hemispherical domes on the roof. At the north-west corner is a well-designed ladies' gallery, resting on massive stone piers. There are three decorated mihrabs on the west. A close examination of the ornamentation will show how much the designs have deteriorated and strayed away from their originals. The panels no longer depict the simple chain-and-bell motif but have developed it into a conventionalised grape tree. The original creeper device here appears as a wavy line with dots filling the surface. The tree-motif of the spandrels is recognised only with its wavy branch encircling the rosette and the leaves lost in multiple dots. The patterns (see pl. LIII, No. 78) have been totally forgotten and their convention has produced lifeless lines and dots, which have no meaning at all. The stone-cutter's art has now reached its evening of life, where nothing intelligible remains, but everything points to its decay and death. Hereafter we no more hear of stone-works in Bengal, excepting the inscriptional tablets, a few cenotaphs, and those used at the tomb of Bibi Pari at Dacca probably a work of foreign masons.

12. Qutb Mosque at Ashtagram:

The last known building in this series is the *Qutb Mosque* (pl. L, No. 75) at Ashtagram in the district of Mymensingh. Its name is derived from a locally popular saint Qutb Saheb, whose ruined tomb is also standing nearby. The oblong mosque with octagonal corner towers has three entrances on the east, and the facade is relieved with vertical panels in two rows. The curvature of the battlements and cornice are over-emphasised. On

the roof there are five hemispherical domes, one large dome at the centre and four smaller ones at the corners. The interior has three mihrabs on the west. In this mosque, too, the brick surface is alsmost barren, and terracotta designs are very negligibly found. On ground of style it may be ascribed to late 16th century A. D. This is the earliest existing mosque in this locality.

CHAPTER X

EARLY MUGHAL STYLE

1. Historical Introduction :- The Mughal rule in India began with Babar's accession to the throne of Delhi in A. D. 1526, but Bengal stood aloof by her right of freedom or rebellion for years to follow. The contemporary Bengal Sultan, Nusrat Shah, chose the diplomatic policy of temporising with the Mughal emperor and, at the same time, uniting the defeated and scattered Afghans for a final resistance. But the fate was decreed otherwise. The Afghans did unite at the end under the ambitious and capable personality of Sher Shah Sur, who not only overthrew the weak successors of Nusrat Shah in A. D. 1538 but also drove into exile Babar's son Humayun, the then Mughal emperor and founded the Suri dynasty of Delhi emperors, lasting, of course, for a brief intervening period.

The exiled Humayun sought refuge at the hospitality of the Safavid kings of Persia, and there he became converted completely to the Persian life and culture, which were to bear considerable influence hereafter upon his descendants. With the help of the Persian king he returned to India and won back his paternal throne of Delhi in A. D. 1556 after defeating the weak and disunited successors of Sher Shah. The Afghans again retreated to the east and held out in Bihar and Bengal till on 3rd March, A. D. 1575 at the battle of Tukaroi Daud Karrani, the Afghan pretender, was finally defeated, and Bengal officially became a province of the Mughal empire. By then Humayun had died, and his son and successor Akbar started his policy of consolidating the empire.

Gaur, the capital of Bengal, welcomed the first Mughal governor Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khana, who unfortunately succumbed to an epidemic on 23rd October, A. D. 1575. The capital was then shifted to Tanda[1] on the other side of the Ganges, but this policy proved an escape only from the edidemic of disease. There was, however, spreading another of rebellion throughout the the province,—a revolt by the local Zamindars for freedom and power, and by the disgruntled Mughal officials against Akbar's unorthodox policy. The rebels succeeded, and Bengal was again lost in A. D. 1580. Local chieftains rose and assumed independence. Among disaffected Mughal officials, well-known is Masum Khan Kabuli, who has left behind his record in the Jami Mosque, built in A. D. 1582[2], at Chatmohar in Pabna district. Among the local Zamindars, famous as Bara Bhuinyas, the redoubtable Isa Khan, Masnad-i-Ala, was able to forge ahead and carve out a principality for himself in East Pakistan with his capital at Sonargaon.

Bengal was to be reconquered and the reconquest began first with annexing Behar and establishing in A. D. 1595, the Mughal capital at Rajmahal, renamed Akbarnagar, — the gateway to Bengal. The next objective was to possess the rebel holds, and that was achieved in the same year. One of the important centres at Sherpur Morcha in Bogra district was occupied, a mud-fort was built, and the name changed into Salimnagar. Then came the turn of the refractory zamindars. The most formidable was Musa Khan, son of Isa Khan. He was

1. In fact the seat of government was first shifted to Tanda by Sulaiman Karrani as early as A.D. 1565, but the aged Mughal governor chose to live in the old buildings of Gaur, and hence the origin of the epidemic.

2. *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, Eng. Tr. by Blochmann, (Calcutta, 1873) p. 621.

compelled to surrender by the Mughal governor, Islam Khan, who after destroying former's capital, chose to establish the Mughal capital at Dacca, renamed Jahangirnagar, in the very heart of East Bengal in order to control all the water routes and thereby the whole province. That was about the year 1608, which marks the beginning of the peaceful reign of the Mughals in Bengal[1].

This longiterrugnum of annexation, rebellion and reconquest convulsed the whole political life of Bengal. During this turmoil little achievement could be expected in cultural field. The local life almost stopped with the progress attained during the Husain Shahi period, and the traditions, then established, could survive only in a decadent state. On the other hand, the Mughals were developing new channels of cultural expression as as well as borrowing and improving new techniques of building construction. All these changes were taking place at Delhi, Agra and Fathpur Sirki at the inspiration of the liberal Mughal emperor Akbar. The fruits of his wise policy were yet to be extended to Bengal. Meanwhile the old local traditions kept up through various vicissitudes, and sometimes minlged with the Mughal innovations, and these served the suppressed aspirations of men.

2. Persistence of Local Style:-

As already stated, this was the most troublous time in Bengal. The buildings of this period follow generally the local style developed earlier, but change was coming in, and we shall notice shortly in detail the innovations. At Sherpur in Bogra district we notice this style persisting till a very late date. It is natural in the case of this town far away from the provincial capital.

1. For details see J. N. Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, chapters VII to XV.

(a) *Qutb Shahi Masjid at Hazrat Pandua*

The first in point of style as well as date is the *Qutb Shahi Masjid* (pl.LVI, no. 82), lying midway between the shrine of Nur Qutb Alam and the *Eklakhi Mausoleum*. A stone inscription tells that it was built in 990 A. H. (A. D. 1582) by Makhdum Shaikh, son of Muhammad al-Khalidi, who was a descendant of the saint Nur Qutb Alam. As a mark of respect to the saint, the present name was given to the mosque[1]. The builder was not a new comer to Bengal, and the time of building also falls during the period when Mughal administration in Bengal totally collapsed. Hence the style, followed, is purely Bengali.

The mosque is built of brick with walls faced with roughly-cut stones. It follows the usual oblong plan, measuring 82′ 6″ by 37′ 8″ externally, with corner towers, crowned with cupolas, still *in situ*. It has five arched doorways on the east. The facade is plain, except for the bands of moulding and curved cornice above. The domes have all fallen. The interior is divided into two aisles and five bays by stone pillars, that originally suppo-rted ten domes of the roof. According to the number of aisles, there are two more doorways on the north and south, while the west wall has five mihrabs. To the north of the central mihrab is a canopied pulpit, still existing in good order. Its idea was probably derived from the one seen in the nearby *Adina Mosque*.

It is remarkable that the profuse decoration of the earlier period had vanished almost totally. Except for the applied cusps at the doorways, multi-cusps at the mihrabs, rosettes at the spandrels and a few other minor

1. Abid Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, pp. 120-21, Cunningham, *Op.cit.* Vol. XV pp. 86-87.

details, nothing of the rich ornamentation is found in this mosque. It is also well worth noting that the corner towers are still crowned with cupolas—a feature common during the earlier periods. Very soon these cupolas will be replaced and the towers will gain more height as we have already seen at the *Qadam-i-Rasul*[1] and *Jhanjhaniyan Mosque*[2]. There they are most probably additions of the Mughal period.

(b) *Monuments at Old Malda*

A group of early Mughal monuments are to be seen at Old Malda — a town situated on the eastern bank of the Mahananda River, opposite its junction with the Kalindri River. Abid Ali surmises that this town "may have first risen to prosperity as a port of the Muhammadan capital of Pandua," and adds that it "was evidently of considerable importance during the rule of the Husaini kings. No less than nine inscriptions bearing the names of kings of this dynasty and ranging in date from 899 to to 938 A. H. (A. D. 1493-1531) have been found within the boundaries of the old town; but the town must have begun to flourish still earlier, if the inscription now over the enclosure door of *Shah Gada shrine* near the *Katra* really belongs to the place; for this inscription records the erection of a mosque by one Hilal in the reign of Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah I, and is dated 19th Sha'ban 895 A.H. (A. D. 1455). In Akbar's time Malda continued to be an important centre, being mentioned in the *Akbarnamah*; while in the *Ain*, the environs of Malda included 11 mahals out of the total of 66 which comprised Sarkar Jannatabad[3].

1. See Chapter, VII.
2. See Chapter, VII.
3. *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 146.

(i) The Katra or Caravansarai :-

At this market town of Old Malda we appropriately find a caravansarai, intended for accommodating travellers on business trip or on some other purpose[1]. Ravenshaw[2] writes :- "The Katra or Fort Gate stands near the river, and leads to a strong enclosure, which appears, of late years, to have been used as a Sarai or resting place for travellers. It is said to have answered formerly as a place of safety for valuable merchandise landed at Old Maldah, and intended for transmission to the Court at Panduah". The plan of the *Katra* is quite simple. It consists of a quadrangular courtyard, enclosed on all sides by residential arched rooms with a surrounding wall on the outside, and having for the entrance two arched gateways (pl. LV, No. 81) on the north and south. Over the gateways are rooms for living. The building is now in a very dilapidated condition. Its design and workmanship are very similar to those of Akbar's caravansarai at Fathpur Sikri[3], and therefore it was very likely constructed towards the close of 16th Century A. D. Its severe plain walls, without any decora-ation, confirm this dating.

(ii) The Tower of Nimsarai :-

The tower (pl. LIV, no. 79) stands at the confluence of the Kalindri and Mahananda rivers, on the opposite bank of the latter at Old Malda, and is said to owe its name to the place being exactly halfway (*Nim*) between Gaur and Pandua[4]. The date of its erection is not known. Both the design as well as the conception of such a tower are an importation into Bengal from outside. It differs in every sense

1. *Ibid.* p. 148.
2. *Gaur its ruins and inscriptions*, p. 42.
3. E. W. Smith, *Mughal Architecture of Fathpur Sikri.*
4. Abid Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 154.

from the *Firoza Minar*[1] or the *Minar* of Chhota Pandua[2]. On the other hand, it resembles to a great extent, Akbar's *Hiran Minar* at Fathpur Sikri[3]. Both are standing on a platform or basement, approached by a flight of steps. The basement at the *Nimsarai* is octagonal, with its sides 18′ long, and contains arched cells within, possibly meant for the residence of guards. The *Hiran Minar* is octagonal for a distance of 27′ 9″, and measures 15′ 3″ in diameter. Above this for a distance of 27′ 9″ it is circular and tapers as it approaches the top, where it is crowned by a huge honey-combed capital. This is surrounded by a perforated stone railing enclosing a gallery above the capital, reached from below by an internal spiral staircase. Crowning the staircase is an octagonal lantern. The top of the lantern is domed. But the tower of *Nimsarai* above the basement is circular, with its diameter 18′9″ at the base. It tapers as it goes up, and at present stands to a height of about 60′. The top has now collapsed. The present height is marked off in two storeys, the demarcation being made by a projecting *chhajja* all round at the point of separation, while just over the the *chhajja* is a window opening to let air and light inside. A spiral staircase within the tower leads up to the top. Both the towers are fantastically studded with imitation elephants' tusks in stone,—those at the *Nimsarai* being about 2½′ long. The exact purpose of erecting these towers cannot be stated. According to tradition the *Hiran Minar* was either a hunting tower or an elephant tower, or in the words of Smith "it was used by the fair inmates of the seraglio for witnessing tournaments which are supposed to have taken place near here." None

1. See Chapter VI.
2. See Chapter III.
3. E. W. Smith, *Mughal Architecture of Fathpur Sikri*, pt. III, pp. 36-37. pl. LXII.

of these purposes suits the *Nimsarai* tower. According to Ravenshaw[1] "Tradition says that this was an alarm tower on which fires were lighted in times of danger or invasion, to give timely notice to the city of Gaur". This tradition is partly supported by its commanding position and it is likely that it served the purpose of a watch-tower. It forms a very striking and picturesque object on approaching it, either from the Kalindri River or from the Mahananda River.

The close similarity of the two towers suggests that the Bengal example was inspired by the other and that they were erected near about the same time,—close of 16th century A. D.

(iii) Jami Masjid :-

At a little distance to the south of the *Caravan Sarai* stands the *Jami Masjid* (pl. LV, No. 80) within a walled compound, entered through an arched doorway. A flight of steps leads up to the doorway, and a courtyard full of pottery and brick-bats separates the doorway from the mosque proper. In the northern part of the courtyard lie a well and an ablution reservoir.

An inscription over the central doorway tells that the mosque was built during the reign of Akbar in the year 1004 A. H. (A. D. 1596). Abid Ali conjectures that during Akbar's reign it was only repaired, and it was really constructed during the reign of Ala-ud-din Husain Shah, because another inscription set up in a neighbouring tomb speaks of the construction of a *Jami mosque* by Husain Shah in 911 A. H. (A. D. 1505)[2]. But this suggestion is not at all borne out by the architecture of the mosque. In its present condition it is a work of Akbar's time.

1. *Op.cit p.* 41.
2. Abid Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 151.

The mosque proper is a plastered brick-work oblong in plan, measuring 72′ long by 27′ wide with usual octagonal corner towers. But the facade on the east shows altogether new features. A tall projected fronton, bordered by ornamental minarets, is seen in the middle of the side, and it contains a small multi-cusped arched doorway, framed within rectangular borders. There are two more doorways on the east, one on either side of the fronton. The battlements, which are curved, are broken in three sections, the middle one over the fronton is higher than those of the side-walls. The cornice as well as other bands of moulding are copied in plaster. The same decorations continue on the north and south sides, each of which has one arched doorway. The back of the west wall shows the mihrab projection, which is also bordered by ornamental minarets. Above, on the roof we have a long ribbed barrel vault in the middle, flanked by low squat domes, which are crowned with a lotus finial. The domes show lines of ribbing in plaster. The interior of the mosque is divided into three sections, the middle one measuring 22′ by 18′ and the side wings 16′ square. No stone pillars have been used. The west wall has three decorated mihrabs,—the decorations being restricted to the spandrels of the arches and to the carved pillars supporting the arches. Remarkable is the actual representation of chain and bell upon these facetted pillars.

It is worth noting that the ribbed barrel vault again appears in this mosque. The plastering of the walls, addition of the fronton and ornamental minarets as well as the low, squat shape of domes crowned with lotus finials are the new features introduced into Bengal during Akbar's regime.

(C) *Sherpur*

Sherpur is situated on the west bank of the river Karatoya, at a distance of about 16 miles due south from Bogra. Its name is given by Abul Fazl as Sherpur Morcha[1]. It is suggested that the town was founded either by Sher Shah himself as the name denotes, or by one of his lieutenants who caused it to be called after his master's name[2]. After the Mughal conquest of Bengal one group of the Qaqshal family settled in this town, but during the rebellion Sherpur grew in importance and became the rendezvous of the rebels. In subsequent reconquest it played an important part as the strategic centre for further Mughal operation. In 1595 Raja Man Singh, who was then Governor of Bengal, marched out from Akbarnagar (Rajmahal), which place he had chosen for the seat of his government, and met the rebels. The enemy unable to resist the imperial army crossed the Brahmaputra and surrendered all the possessions they had captured on the west of the river. On account of the approach of the rains Raja Man Singh decided to encamp at Sherpur, and built a fort there which he named Salimnagar in honour of prince Salim, afterwards the emperor Jahangir[3].

There is no trace of the fort now to be seen at Sherpur. On the bank of the Karatoya we only meet with numerous brick-bats and pot-sherds, which recall the once-busy life at the place. To-day it is reduced into a village, covered thickly with dense jungles all

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1. Jarett, *Ain-i-Akbari*. p. 138.
2. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, 1937-38, p. 18.
3. *ibid*. p. 18; *Akbarnamah*, Vol. III, p. 697 *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 211.

round. In these jungles are preserved three ancient mosques in a dilapidated condition.[1]

(i) Kherua Mosque :- This is the earliest existing mosque at Sherpur. A stone inscription at the mosque records that it was built by Mirza Murad Khan, son of Jauhar Ali Khan Qaqshal on the 25th Zul-hijja, 989 A. H. (20th January, A. D. 1582)[2]

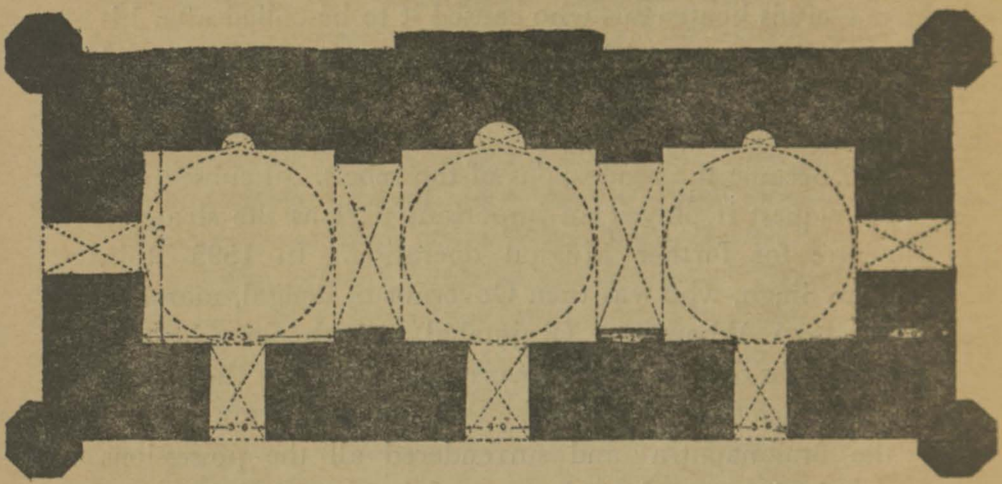


Fig. 16

In its exterior plan and design the mosque (Fig. 16) follows the old tradition. Its outside measurement is 57′ long by 24′ 6″, and the usual towers at the four corners are very heavy and massive. The eastern side shows three arched openings, each bordered within rectangular frames, and between the openings vertical panels add variety to the plain brick surface. Flanking the central doorway, within the upper panels are stone tablets bearing the Persian inscription, referred to above. Other panels have simple bands of moulding, besides the usual rosettes.

1. *Sherpurer Itihasa* in *Rangpur Sahitya Parishad Patrika,* dated 1317 B. S. pp. 36-38.
2. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica,* 1937-38, p. 19, *Epigraphia Indica,* vol. II, pp. 288-89.

The battlements and cornice are curved in the old fashion, and below the cornice runs a frieze of small arched panels. The north and south sides have each an arched doorway, while the west shows the projection of the central mihrab. A moulded band runs round the middle of the walls, bisecting it into two equal halves. Above, on the roof there are three hemispherical domes, resting on the side walls. No extra pillar support has been used. The domes cover three square sections, into which the interior of the mosque is divided by means of lateral arches springing from the side-walls. The 'phase of transition' is formed by a beautiful arrangement of oversailing courses of bricks. The western wall has three semi-circular mihrabs, each bordered within rectangular frames. The spandrels of the arches are embossed with rosettes, while a leafy pattern decorates the vertical side of the frame. The upper side is crowned with blind merlons.

Outwardly the mosque retains the decorations of the older tradition. But the profuse terracotta ornamentation is no more to be seen on the brick surface. Along with the *Qutb Shahi mosque* of Hazrat Pandua it presents almost a barren appearance. Yet the mosque fundamentally differs from all the earlier ones in its internal arrangement. The interior forms a single hall, divided into three square bays, each covered with a dome. Henceforth during the Mughal period three-bay-mosque became the usual form in Bengal.

(ii) Bibi Masjid

Bibi Masjid is another old mosque in the same locality and built in the same style. An inscription, which was formerly set up over its central doorway on the east, records that it was "built by Sayyid Ali Mutawalli during the reign of Shah Jahan in the year 1038 A. H." (A.D.1628)[1].

1. *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1885, p. 105.

It is a single-domed square mosque, measuring 22′ each side externally, with octagonal towers at the four corners. A single arched doorway is provided in each of the north, east and south sides. The battlements and cornice emphasise the curvature more than usual. There is no other decoration on the wall except for a band of moulding, which runs all round the wall bisecting it into two halves. The dome has now fallen, but the oversailing courses of bricks can still be seen at the corners. There is no extra stone pillar in the interior to support the dome. The west wall has three small mihrabs.

It is worth noting that, except for the technical improvement in the construction of the dome, the older tradition of 'brick style' continued as late as A. D. 1628.

(iii) Khondkar Tola Mosque

This is the third mosque in the same locality. Its name is derived from that of the neighbouring hamlet, *Khondkar Tola.* An inscription, recovered from this mosque records:- "This mosque was built through the benefit of confidence in the forgiving God during the reign of Shah Jahan, the famous conqueror of the world..........and (in the time of) Mu'zzam Khan, Subah - (dar = governor) of Bengal in the year 1042 (A.D.1632)[1]". It seems that for its building expenses subscription was raised from among the people, probably because no single person in the town of Sherpur came forward to bear the whole expenses. It may be that by A.D.1632 the importance of Sherpur was lessened and the rich and well-to-do persons migrated to some other flourishing towns.

Khondkar Tola Masjid is built in the same style as the earlier two mosques of the locality. It is biggest in size, and measures 78′ long by 30′ wide externally. Besides

1. *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. II, p. 290.

the usual octagonal towers at the four corners, we also find extra semi-octagonal turrets placed on either side of the central doorway on the east as well as on either side of the projected central mihrab on the west. Except for this variation, it resembles in all other respects of design and decoration with the *Kherua Masjid*, noticed earlier. Its three domes, that originally covered the roof, have now collapsed.

Conclusion

These are all the buildings, so far known, that fall during the transition period. The time-limit is not fixed. These monuments begin with A. D. 1582 and go up to A. D. 1632. The 'brick style of Bengal' has been generally followed with an advance in technical knowledge of building a dome without pillar support. But the terracotta art has suffered a great loss. It has almost disappeared. At the same time we should note that in places like Old Malda the Mughal influence has been felt to a much greater extent as early as A.D. 1596. The *Nim-Sarai* tower is almost a copy of the *Hiran Minar* of Fathpur Sikri. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the local 'brick style' continued to be followed in the country side towns, while in the capital at Dacca as well as in other important towns the Mughal influence was felt more and more. Probably the buildings already bore, as at Old Malda, the Mughal character. But no existing example of such an early date, in its original condition, has so far been traced in Dacca.

CHAPTER XI

INTRODUCTION OF BENGALI HUT ROOF ARCHITECTURE

It has been discussed before[1] how Bengalis have evolved curved type of roof, made of bamboo and reeds, to cover their humble cottages and answer readily the effects of monsoonic rain that needs rapid draining. This roof takes two forms :—

(i) Chauchala roof

in which the roof is modelled after the ordinary *chauchala* hut. It has covering, on four sides, which are more or less curved in some domical, in others flatter, but they never make a straight pyramid, and secondly the coverings have eves drawn out lower down to a point at each corner, thus making the roof-base curved like the segment of a circle. This has been copied in brick architecture to cover a rectangular space as against an ordinary dome which is constructed over square. The examples can now be seen at the *Sath Gumbad Mosque* (middle of 15th century A.D.) at Bagerhat, *Chhota Sona Masjid* (pl. XXXVIII, No. 58) and *Lattan Masjid* (pl. XXVIII, no. 47) at Gaur. We also find a sort of pyramidal covering over the facade of *Akbar's tomb* (completed A. D.1612-13) at Sikandra[2] near Agra as well as over the *tomb of I'timad-ud-Daula*[3] (begun A.D. 1628) at Agra. But these are not of the Bengali type, as they make a straight pyramid and their eves also are not curved. They were probably copied

1. See pp. 12-24.
2. See Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture* (The Islamic Period) pl. LXXV
3. *Ibid*, pl. LXXIX.

from the type occurring in Raja Birbal's house[1] and Jodha Bai's palace[2] at Fathpur Sikri. The first beautiful example of the Bengali type in Upper India is the 'throne in Diwan-i-Am[3]' at Delhi, constructed by Shah Jahan. With certain modification it is also seen at the Naulakha building constructed by Shah Jahan in A.D. 1633 within Lahore fort. Here the main roof is flat, but the parapets and the eves on three sides are curved in the typical Bengali fashion. In Deccan we find it at the Dargah of Banda Nawaz[4], built in A.D. 1640. In the 18th century A.D. it is largely copied in Rajput buildings.

(ii) Bungalow roof

which is copied from the ordinary *dochala* hut. It has coverings on two sides, which are joined at the top, thus making a curved ridge with gable ends. The eves are curved as before and the ridge is generally crowned with *Kalasa* finials in imitation of the knots found in the original roof. There is no existing example of this roof in Bengal, that can be dated to pre-Mughal period.

(iii) The spread of this style :-

In Gaur we have got only one building, known as the Mausoleum (Pl.LVII, No.83) of Fath Khan[5] (died C.1657 A.D.), which is covered by Bungalow roof. At Sonargaon and other places the head post (*chiraghdan*) of a tomb has a similar top cover. At Egarasindur in Mymensingh district the courtyard of *Shah Muhammad's mosque*[6] (middle of 17th Century A.D.) is approached through a gateway having the same kind of roof. Another example can be seen at *Kartalab Khan's Mosque* (pl.LXXII

1. E. W. Smith, *Mughal Architecture of Fathpur Sikri*, pt. II, p. VIII
2. *Ibid*, pl. LXII.
3. Percy Brown, *Op.Cit.*, pl. LXXVII.
4. *Ibid.* pl. LI.
5. See below.
6. See Chapter XIII.

No. 101) (early 18th century A.D.) at Dacca. A number of Hindu temples in Bengal have been built in this style[1]. During the reign of Shah Jahan the Bungalow roof found its way to Agra and Lahore. Within Agra Fort the north pavilion, said to be the residence of Jahanara Begam, daughter of Shah Jahan, and the south pavilion[2], known as *Bangla-i-Darshan-i-Mubarak*[3], show gilded Bungalow roof. Inside Lahore Fort we get a similar pavilion, known as *Sahdari* which was built by Shah Jahan in A.D. 1645. Another curved roof building[4] is existing to the east of the *Shish Mahal*. *Moti Masjid*[5] at Delhi and *Begampura Mosque* at Lahore show the typical Bengali curved cornice. This curvature is also noticed in most of the Sikh buildings at Lahore, but in many examples the cornice is not a perfect curve. It takes the form of a wavy curve.

(iv) Time of introduction

The examples, enumerated above, show that the Bengali curved roofs began appearing in Upper India from the time of Shah Jahan. No example of an earlier date is known so far. This sounds strange, when we know that Bengal was conquered by Akbar and was completely subjugated by A.D. 1612 during the regime of Jahangir. E.B. Havell accounts for this anomaly thus :—"From the structural point of view the influences which account for the difference between Akbar's buildings and the Moghul buildings of the seventeenth century came mostly from Gaur and from Bijapur. The break-up of the great Bengal building centre towards the end of the sixteenth century sent many craftsmen of that school

1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, new series, Vol. V, 1909 pp. 141-51.
2. E. B. Havel, *Indian Architecture, second edition.* pl. CI.
3. Mvi Ashraf Husain, *Guide to Agra Fort.*
4. J. Ph. Vogel, *Tile Mosaics of the Lahore Fort*, 24.
5. E. B. Havell, *op. cit.* PL. CL.

to the imperial Moghul court, whence they migrated later on into Rajputana. Their influence became apparent in the bent roof of the Golden Pavilion in the Agra Palace, the bent cornice of the Moti Masjid at Delhi, and in the cusped Hindu arches which are characteristic of most of the later Moghul buildings. We have already seen the process of their formation from the arches of Buddhist-Hindu shrines both at Gaur in the fifteenth century and at Bijapur in the sixteenth century.

"When Aurangzib's fanaticism drove all but the orthodox Musulman craftsmen from the Moghul court, the Bengalis and others entered the service of Hindu princes in Rajputana, and from the beginning of the eighteenth century many of the characteristic features of the Bengali tradition appear in Rajput buildings. It is this migration of craftsmen, either voluntary or compulsory, which so long as architecture continued to be the art of building gave the true key to its historical development in all çountries[1]"

There may be some truth in the migration of Bengali craftsmen to the imperial capital but it is difficult to understand how the brick masons of Bengal could easily work on marble and red sandstone. Secondly, these masons could as well have been imported during Akbar's time, but at Fathpur Sikri, which is indeed a museum of Indian architectural styles, we do not find a single building having a Bengali roof. On the other hand we find Shah Jahan so fond of this Bengali curvature that in all his palaces at Agra, Delhi, or Lahore he has taken special care to produce one or two fine specimens. The golden pavilions at Agra, the marble throne in *Diwan-i-Am* at Delhi and the *Naulakha* at Lahore are monuments of

1. *Ibid.* pp. 211-12.

no ordinary beauty or importance. Therefore it seems likely that it was the fondness of Shah Jahan which made possible for these Bengali hut roofs to become so popular in Upper India. Shah Jahan had also an opportunity to cultivate this taste. As a prince, when he revolted against his father Jahangir, he was driven to take shelter in Bengal. Here he was able to defeat the Subahdar Ibrahim Khan, and rule over the province for some time[1]. During his stay in this province Shah Jahan probably became fond of Bengali curved roofs. On his trek through the province he must have seen rows of these huts along the river bank or peeping out through the jungles, and these probably left an indelible impression on his mind.

It is difficult to say why in Bengal there is no existing example of a building having curved roof of the second type prior to the time of Shah Jahan. H.E. Stapleton has tried to ascribe the building, in which lies buried Fath Khan, to the time of the House of Raja Ganesha[2] (A.D. 1418-1435). This building will be considered below :—

(v) The Mausoleum of Fath Khan

The Mausoleum along with the *Qadam-i-Rasul* building (noticed earlier) stands within an enclosure surrounded on three sides by brick-built wall and on the eastern side by the rampart wall of the *citadel of Gaur.* The enclosure wall is a Mughal gateway— a simple flat arched entrance under a half-domed facade, which is crowned with pinna cles. There is another small doorway on the south.

Fath Khan was the son of Dilir Khan. Abid Ali records a tradition regarding him :— "The Emperor Aurangzib, suspecting that the local saint Shah Niamatu-ullah was advising Shuja to wage war against him, sent

1. J. N. Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, vol. II, pp. 309-13.
2. Abid Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 65, f. n. I

an officer called Dilir Khan to Gaur to cut his head off. The saint, however, had not given such advice, nor had he ever intended to do so. Dilir Khan arrived at Gaur with his two sons. One of them (Fath Khan) vomitted blood and died on the spot. This so alarmed Dilir Khan that he only paid his respects to the saint. On the matter being reported to Aurangzib, the Emperor thereafter trusted the saint[1]." This Fath Khan lies buried in the mausoleum, If there is any truth in the tradition which appertains to the time of the struggle between Aurangzeb and Shuja, the date of Fath Khan's death may be fixed somewhere between A.D. 1657 and 1660. The mausoleum may also be ascribed to this date.

But H.E. Stapleton objects and argues :— "It seems to the author that the building is of the time of the Hindu kings (possibly Raja Ganesha) and that it was used for a temple. An arrangement for hanging a chain and bell by an iron hook in the central part of the ceiling is still visible and the building itself lies north to south. There are door openings on three sides only. From all these facts it may be concluded that a Hindu god was worshipped here[2]." This point will be decided when we examine the building in detail.

The mausoleum (pl. LVII, No. 83) is a plastered brick-work and consists of a single room, meausring externally 30′8″ long by 21′5″ wide, with a flat arched doorway on the south and west, the arch being fitted with stone lintel and door jambs. The facade shows rectangular panels in plaster, formed by the intersection of vertical and horizontal bands,—those on the northern side having been peeled off. The western side has two small arched niches within panel flanking the doorway.

1. Abid Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
2. *Ibid*, p. 65. f. n. 1.

The arch of the niches is stilted and four-centred. The roof is made up of two sloping sides making a ridge on the top and gable ends on the north and south sides. It is triangular in section. The ridge is curved and is crowned with five knots. The eves also are curved and drawn out in imitation of the flexible bamboo eves. It is of the type of bungalow roof, and resembles exactly the *Dochala* hut-roof of Bengal. Inside, the walls are neatly plastered and contain small arched niches On the floor lies the masonry cenotaph of Fath Khan—a plastered semicircular long brick-work standing upon a rectangular base, lying north and south. The ceiling has a small iron ring.

There is nothing in this building that speaks of the time of the House of Raja Ganesha. In that period, as we have seen[1], it was not possible to have an edifice without displaying terracotta art. There is not a single monument existing in Bengal belonging to Pre-Mughal period, which has its walls plastered. The plaster was in fact discarded simply to decorate the walls with moulded designs on brick surface. The rectangular panels in plaster, flat arches as well as four-centred stilted arches were introduced in Bengal during the Mughal period. Therefore this building must be dated to this period.

The other arguments, that it was formerly a temple, do not seem to be correct. Its position lying north to south has been dictated by the presence of a Muslim tomb within, which must lie north to south. The doorways are only on two sides, and not three. The east and north sides are closed. There is no niche inside to instal an image. The presence of iron ring in the ceiling can not prove anything, as it might have been used for a chandelier. The conception of this building is entirely

1. See Chapter V.

against the local traditions of temple construction. The temples that have survived to the present day show profuse decoration of terracotta art. It will be shown further[1] that this local art, when discarded from Mughal buildings, found expression only in Hindu temples. Therefore this building can not be a temple. It was built for the purpose of a tomb.

1. See Chapter XIV.

CHAPTER XII

IMPERIAL MUGHAL STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE IN BENGAL

1. Historical background :- "It was only in the reign of Jahangir", observes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "that Mughal administration really started in Bengal, because Akbar's time and the first eight years after Jahangir's accession were the age of conquering generals, when the province was not yet ready to accept and work a settled civil government. It was only Islam Khan's success in crushing out—and not, as under his predecessors, merely defeating in skirmishes—the old heads of local rebellion, that made regular peaceful Mughal rule in this province possible. Though Bengal had been included among the eleven Subahs to which Akbar in November 1586 sent out orders for setting up his new type of uniform provincial administration, the order took a quarter of a century to be actually enforced."[1] The first event of importance, that followed, was the establishment of the provincial capital at Dacca in July A. D. 1608[2]. From Rajmahal (Akbarnagar)—the gateway to Bengal—to Dacca (Jahangirnagar)—the very heart of the province—the Mughal governors had been forced to move mainly to crush the rebel chiefs, among whom the formidable Musa Khan, the son of Isa Khan, had his stronghold in the locality of Sonargaon, opposite the river Lakhya, just a few miles away from Dacca. And, now after the

1. *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, ed. by J.N. Sarkar, p.216.
2. A.H.Dani, *Dacca a record of its changing fortunes*, Dacca, 1956, p.19.

conquest, in order to control the province and restore peace and tranquility Dacca was chosen to be the capital mainly for the facility of its river communication so essential in this deltaic region.

For nearly a century, with a short break[1] about the middle (between 1639-60), Dacca continued to hold this proud position of the provincial metropolis. During this period there was an all round development of the city. It extended in area, its trade and industries developed, its commerce flourished, and it also attracted a large number of foreigners whose accounts throw much light on the wealth and general prosperity of Dacca in the seventeenth century. No wonder that soon it became "the Queen of the Cities of the East."[2]

But this prosperity was not confined to Dacca alone. The consequences of the Mughal conquest were far reaching. Sir Jadunath Sarkar summarises thus: "Mughal conquest opened for Bengal a new era of peace and progress. It re-established that contact with upper India,—and through upper India by the land-route with the countries of Central Asia and Western Asia,—which Bengal had lost first when Buddhism became dead in the land of its birth and next when its Muslim viceroys threw off the overlordship of Delhi. The narrow isolation which thus afflicted Bengal about 1339 was broken once a year by the visit of a ship or two from Malaya and far more rarely from Zanzibar, which brought to our shores the commodities and cultural envoys of the outer Muslim world. But with the opening of the 16th century this sea-borne traffic was endangered and all but stopped.

1. During this period the provincial viceroy Shah Shuja transferred his seat of residence from Dacca to Rajmahal, but the main administration remained at Dacca.

2. For detail see Dani, *Op. Cit*, chapter II.

"It was only in 1666 that a Mughal viceroy broke up these foreign pirates' nest by conquering Chatgaon. The imperial peace, which had by this time settled on Bengal, led to an immense increase of this province's maritime trade, but almost entirely through European agency. Thus Bengal gained a second line of free communication with the vast outer world, while officials, scholars, preachers, traders, artisans and soldiers continued to flock by the land-route from the heart of the Mughal empire into what had now become a regular well-administered province of that empire. The return current, generated by the same imperial peace and regular administration, was represented by the Vaishnav pilgrims and teachers who went from Bengal to Vrindavan, and beyond Vrindavan even to Jaipur and Kurukshetra ; and also by the much thinner stream of Bengal "candidates" for the public service or ambitious cadets of landed families or discontented litigants defeated in the provincial law courts, who sought to improve their fortunes by a visit to the royal court at Agra and Delhi.

"The renaissance which we owe to English rule early in the 19th century had a precursor,—a faint glimmer of dawn, no doubt,---two hundred and fifty years earlier. These were the fruits, the truly glorious fruits, of Mughal peace"[1].

2. The new setting : The establishment of the Mughal authority in Bengal coincided with the emergence of new urban centres, in which the Mughal soldiery and its retinue dominated. With the influx of this new population the older taste and manners of life lost their importance, and new decorum and refinery obtained in the towns. The political linking-up

1 *istory of Bengal*, vol. II, pp. 188-89.

of Bengal with northern India led to the inter-flow of the cultural trends that were to bear fruit in the various fields of life. The local developments of the earlier periods, that had confined to the bounds of the deltaic land, now opened to a wider world of influence. How deep was the change, can be estimated only when the entire socio-religious life of Bengal is surveyed. In the field of architecture that departure is quite definite. The new changes are seen more in the cities than in the villages. The study of this urban setting reveals the Mughal pattern of life in Bengal. The emergence of this new life was a slow movement as it had to follow the course of political changes in the country. In the earlier stages the main centres lay in north west Bengal at Gaur, Tanda, Rajmahal, Ghoraghat, Sherpur Morcha and other less known places. Later Dacca, Sylhet, Chittagong and many places in Mymensingh district and south Bengal came into prominence. In south west Bengal the most important places were Burdwan and Murshidabad. Of all the cities, Dacca, being the capital, had a special significance as it is here that we can study the growth of the imperial Mughal style as it was practised in Bengal.

3. Dacca : The early history of Dacca is still shrouded in mystery. Its very name is a porblem: "Three explanations are given of the origin of the city's name : one that it is derived from the *dhak* (*butea frondosa*) a tree which is said to have been common there in ancient times ; another that it took its name from Dhakeswari, 'the concealed goddess' whose temple is said to have been first erected by Ballal Sen ; while a third story has it that Islam Khan fixed the boundaries of the city at those points north, east and west

where the sound of the drums *dhak* beaten on the river banks ceased to be audible".[1] None of these traditions appeals to reason. During Ballal Sen's time Vikrampur, and not Dacca, was the important town in this region, while the present temple of Dhakeshwari does not speak of great antiquity. The name Dacca is centainly earlier than Islam Khan's time as we find a mention of the name of *Dhaka Bazu* in the *Ain-i-Akbari*,[2] and moreover the new name given by the Mughal governor was Jahangirnagar, and not Dacca. Dr. Taylor[3] identified this place with the city of Bengala mentioned by European travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but this identification is hardly borne out by the evidence[4]. Whatever may be the origin of the city, it seems that by Islam Khan's time Dacca was already a Commercial centre, and from strategic point of view under the then circumstance it was no doubt the first place of importance in Bengal.

Islam Khan himself contributed much to the development of the town. A new fort[5] was built, inside which a new palace was constructed, and new roads were laid down. The defences of the city were improved by means of two forts made on either side of the point where the river Dulai bifurcated (one branch joining the Lakhya at Demra and the other at Khizrpur) described by the author of the *Baharistan* as the forts of Beg Murad Khan[6]. All these have disappeared

1. *Eastern Bengal Distt. Gazetteers, Dacca.* (Allahabad, 1912), p. 172
2. English Translation, by Jarrett, vol. II, p. 138.
3. *A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca*, (Calcutta, 1840), P. 92.
4. See the details in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, vo. XIX, 1943, pp. 297-317.
5. Now represented by the Jail building.
6. See Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani, *Dacca. A Record of its changing fortunes*, PP. 15-16 and map No. 1.

except the name of Islam Khan, which is preserved in the name Islampur and in a mosque, called *Islam Khan ki Masjid* in Ashiq Jamadar lane. But for the name the mosque gives a modern appearance. However, the different localities in Dacca are well demarcated. The old names that still survive, clearly distinguish the town of the Pre-Mughal period from the later city of the Mughal time, and these stand in great contrast to the new developments seen in the 19th and 20th centuries. The older area is marked by two prominent canals--one the Dulai Khal that runs through the crowded city and encircled the Pre-Mughal town, and the other the Karwan Khal that served as the outer boundary of the expanded city of Mughal Dacca.

4. Binat Bibi's Mosque :- In the oldest locality of Dacca at Narinda is situated the Binat Bibi's mosque, which, according to an inscription, was built by Bakht Binat, daughter of Marhamat, in A. D. 1457. This is the only relic of the pre-Mughal Dacca, but the mosque has now been completely renovated. Originally it appears to have been unplastered, consisting of a single-domed square room measuring 12′ internally, with octagonal corner towers, curved battlements and simple arched openings on three sides. Now the walls are plastered. Another domed room and a verandah have been added.

There is no other pre-Mughal monument now existing in Dacca. All old buildings have been renovated in later times. The important monuments, that are still preserved, more or less, in their original condition date from the viceroyalty of Prince Shah Shuja, who was appointed in A. D. 1639 and remained in charge of the province till 1660. From the architectural point of view the buildings can be studied under the following groups :-

(i) Mosques and other religious buildings. (ii) Tombs (iii) Katras (iv) Forts and (v) Bridges.

(1) Mosques and other religious Buildings

Dacca is the city of mosques. There are more than five hundred mosques in the different localities of Dacca. Being religious buildings, they are kept in constant repair and precisely for this reason their features are liable to be changed in succeeding periods. The most important mosque that has suffered from the architectural point of view is the *Chauk Mosque*, originally built by Nawab Shaista Khan in 1086 A. H. (A.D. 1676)[1]. However, despite these alterations, attempt is here made to describe the main types. Typologically they can be divided into (a) Bungalow type, (b) Single-domed type (c) Three-domed type and (d) Mosques on a raised platform.

5. Churihatta Mosque :- In the Churihatta quarter of the city near the Chauk is situated *Churihatta mosque*, which is characterised by bungalow type of roof, so much spoken of in the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi*. The mosque was built by a Mughal officer, Muhammad Beg[2] in 1649, when Prince Shah Shuja was the viceroy of Bengal. The mosque is rectangular in plan with towers at the four corners. The eastern side has three doorways, each of which opens through two successive arches. The facade is marked with numerous square and rectangular panels, and the cornice, which is straight, is faced with blind merlons. The interior hall is covered with an intersecting vaulted roof, the line of intersection is curved and so is the central ridge. But this vaulted roof is a development from the north Indian pyramidal type. It has

1. *Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani, Op. cit.* p. 101.
2. Munshi Rahman Ali, *Tawarikh-i-Dhaka*, 1910, pp 256-58.

no long drawn eves as found in the Bengali type. The mosque is now renovated.

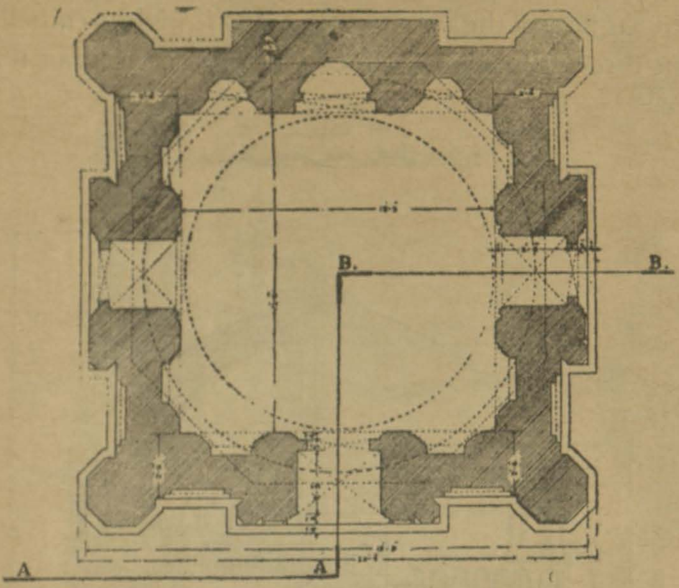


Fig. 17

6. Allakuri's Mosque :- The mosque[1] stands by the side of the Sat-masjid road in the Muhammadpur Colony. It illustrates the typical Mughal mosque of the single-domed square type of the late 17th century A.D. It stands on a raised high-land, where an old mosonry well can also be seen. The ground plan (Fig. 17) shows the typical variation in the square plan with its four corner towers and the projected fronton in the middle of each side, through which a doorway leads into the mosque from the north, east and south sides. The fronton is bordered by a slender pinnacle. The corner towers are topped over by plastered kiosks and the straight parapet is faced with blind merlons (pl. LXIX, No· 97). The interior makes a small dark room, measur-

1. Dani, *Op. cit.* pp. 128-29.

ing $12\frac{1}{2}'$ each side, but the thickness of the wall keeps the room cool even during the hot season. The western face of the interior (Fig. 18) is highly embellished with three mihrabs contained within rectangular frames.

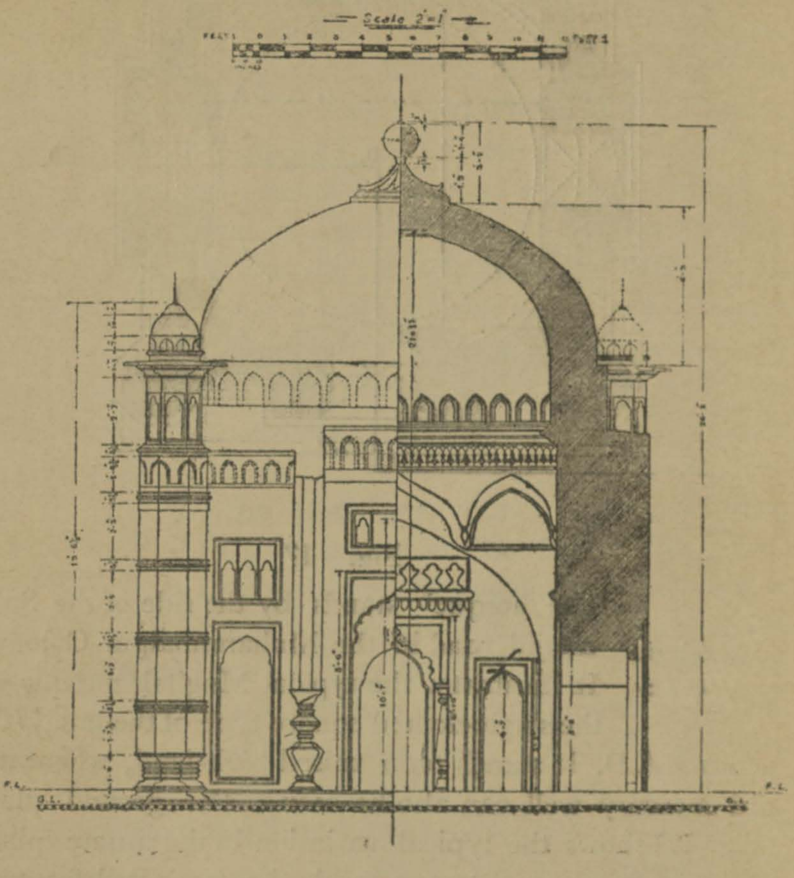


Fig. 18

The dome, which has basal leaf ornament above a frieze of floral design, is carried on squinches and crowned by a finial. The original inscription of the mosque is now lost, but the great care in decoration suggests a date in the time of Nawab Shaista Khan, who is responsible for many other buildings in the neighbourhood.

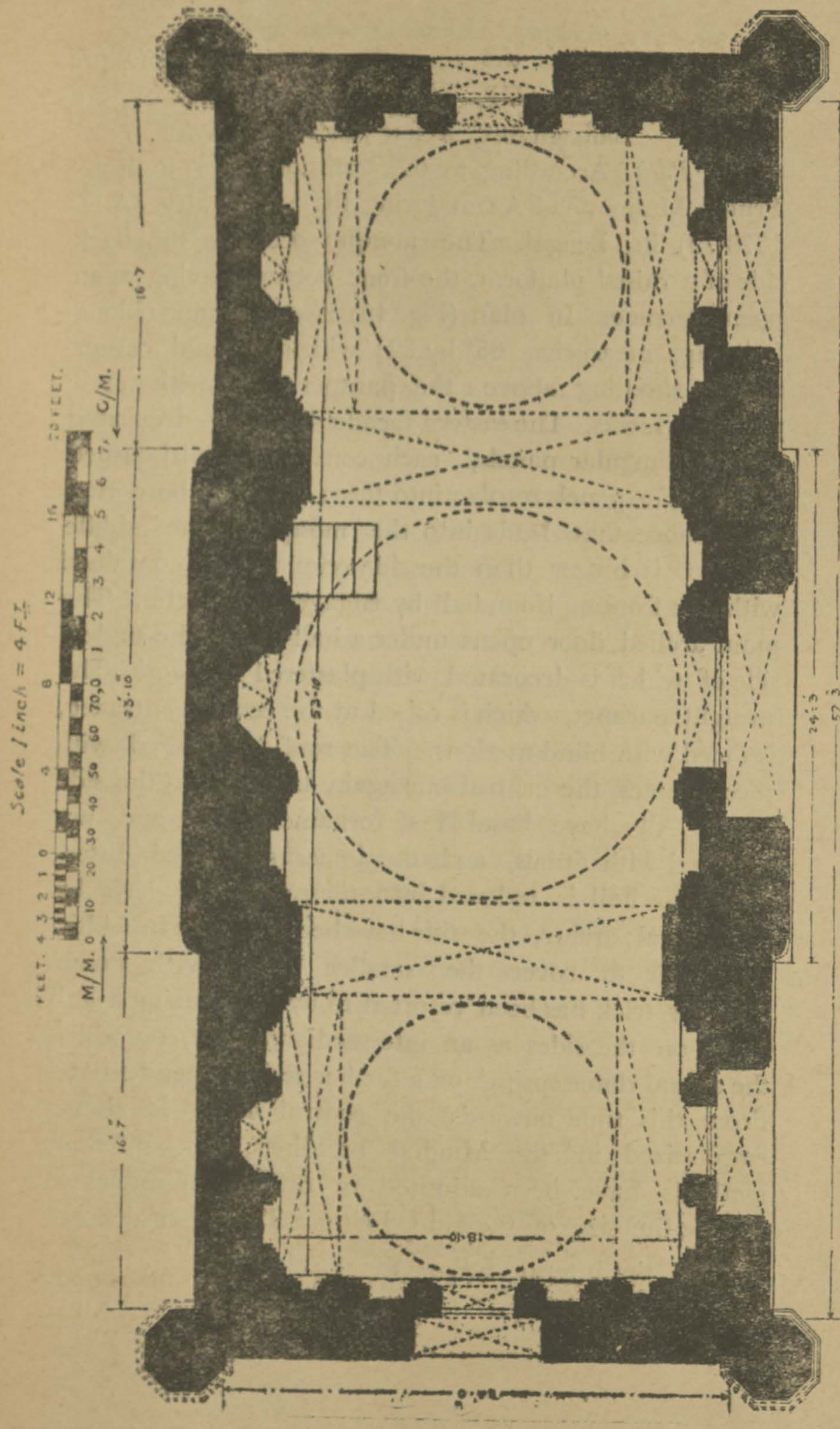

Scale 1 inch = 4 FT.
FEET.
20 FEET.
M/M.
C/M.
16·7
16·7
23·10
53·10
24·3
57·3
18·10

Fig. 19

7. Lalbagh Mosque :- This is the three-domed type of mosque (pl. LXIII, No. 90) standing within the Lalbagh fort, a few yards west of the *Tomb of Bibi Pari.* According to the tradition it was built by Prince Muhammad Azam during his viceroyalty (A.D. 1678-79) in Bengal. The mosque occupies the back side of a raised platform, the front portion serving as an open terrace. In plan (Fig. 19) it makes an oblong building, measuring 65′ by 32½′ with octagonal corner minars shooting above the parapet wall with their plastered kiosks. The eastern facade is highly decorated with rectangular panels, each containing multi-cusped arches. The panels resolve into three sets, each bordering an entrance that leads into the mosque. The middle entrance is bigger than the side ones, and is contained within a fronton bounded by engaged pinnacles. The main arched door opens under a half-dome, the under-side of which is decorated with plastered net-work. The straight parapet, which is raised at the central entrance, is faced with blind merlons. The roof is covered with three domes, the central one again bigger than the side ones. All have basal leaf ornamentation and are crowned with finials, and the domes are fluted. Internally the hall is reduced into three unequal bays by two lateral arches, the side bays being smaller in width. In order to cover the smaller bays with domes a clever trick has been resorted to by introducing a half dome on the sides as an intermediary stage, on which the actual dome springs on a further series of pendentives. From this time onwards the central dome is always emphasized in the Mughal buildings, but different methods have been adopted in different mosques to reduce the size of the side domes. The other decorations in the interior follow the usual style.

8. Mosque of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz :- The mosque stands between the Ramna Race course and the present High Court building. It occupies the western half of an elevated spot, the eastern half having a tomb (described below) and other private buildings. It is named after the builder Haji Khwaja Shahbaz, whose inscription[1] dated 1089 A.H. (A.D. 1679) is still hung up over the central doorway.

The mosque now shows a dismal appearance owing to the wear of time, but architecturally it imbibes all the features of a three-domed mosque. It is oblong in plan, measuring 68′ by 26′ externally, with corner towers which are octagonal to the height of the parapet and rounded upwards and having ribbed cupolas on the top. Adjacent to these towers we have subsidiary turrets, one on each side. The eastern facade (Pl.LXIV, No. 91) shows the usual projection of the surface in the middle, through which opens the central doorway fitted with stone arch-frame. On either side of the central door can be seen five rows of niches. There are two more arched entrances on this side. The parapet is decorated with blind merlons, while the roof is covered over with three squat shouldered domes with a finial as the crown. The back of the western wall also shows the projection of the central mihrab with a turret on either side. The interior hall (pl.LXV, No. 92) makes a beautiful setting with two arches effectively dividing the hall into three bays. The lateral arches with the decorated mihrabs and other subsidiary rectangular alcoves and panels give a lively grace to the building.

A later copy of this building can be seen in *Musa Khan ki-Masjid*[1] near Dacca Hall. That must have

1. Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op, Cit.*, p. 255 ; Aulad Hasan, *Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca* p. 29

been built towards the end of 18th century, as it is standing on a raised platform.

9. Satgumbad Mosque : The mosque (pl.LXVI, No.93) stands on the edge of a swampy pool, which dries up during the summer. It is close to the Muhammadpur Colony, and the name Satmasjid Road is derived from that of the mosque. Practically the mosque is of the three-domed type, but its four corner towers are hollow and built in two stages with a covering of dome. Thus in all there are seven domes in the mosque, and hence the name *Satgumbad* (Seven-domed) *Mosque*. It is oblong in plan, measuring 58′ long by 27′ wide externally. The eastern facade is embellished with panels in the usual Mughal style with the central arched entrance receiving greater prominence than the side doorways. The battlemented parapet as well as the basal ornamentation of the domes are emphasized by the addition of blue colour, mostly renewed. The central dome is also bigger than the side ones, and this reduction in the size is achieved by the same process as at the *Lalbagh mosque*. The interior hall also makes a chaste appearance. On the whole the mosque appeals for its graceful arrangement of the different parts. Stylistically it can be dated to the later half of the 17th century A.D. It may have been built by Nawab Shaista Khan, as the local tradition[1] remembers.

10. *Bibi Mariam's Mosque:-* This mosque is also said to have been built by Nawab Shaista Khan[2]. Munshi Rahman Ali calls it *Haji Ganj ki Masjid* because it stands in that quarter of the town of Narayanganj. Bibi Mariam is said to be one of the daughters of Shaista Khan, who is lying buried close by in a tomb. The mosque

1. Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op-Cit*. pp. 279-80
2. *Ibid*, p. 294.

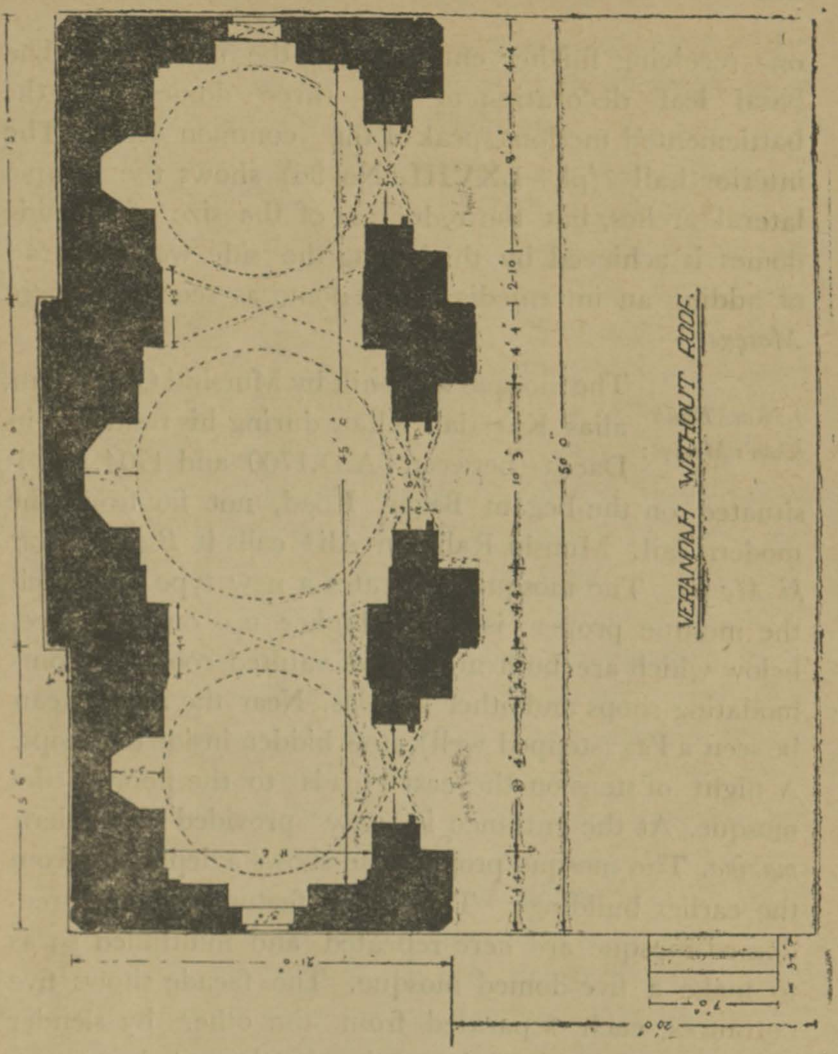


Fig 20

(pl. LXXVI, No. 105) is again of the three-domed type (Fig. 20), but it has suffered much from later repairs, especially the corner towers are completely modernised. The photo shows a few free standing pillars in front of the mosque, erected for a new verandah that will completely change the eastern face. As originally built, the eastern facade shows the usual three arched entrances, each opening under a half-dome, the central

one receiving further emphasis in the usual way. The basal leaf decoration of the three domes and the battlemented merlons speak of the common style. The interior hall (pl. LXVIII, No 96) shows the simple lateral arches, but the reduction of the size of the side domes is achieved by thickening the side walls instead of adding an intermediate half-dome as seen in *Lalbagh Mosque*.

1. Kar Talab Khan's Mosque: The mosque was built by Murshid Quli Khan, alias Kartalab Khan during his residence in Dacca between A.D.1700 and 1704.[1] It is situated on the Begam Bazar Road, not far from the modern jail. Munshi Rahman Ali[2] calls it *Begam Bazar ki Masjid*. The mosque illustrates a new type in which the mosque proper is built higher up on a terrace, below which are built number of vaulted rooms accommodating shops and other persons. Near the mosque can be seen a *Vav* (stepped well), now hidden inside the shops. A flight of steps on the east leads to the floor of the mosque. At the entrance is now provided a modern *mazina*. The mosque proper also shows a departure from the earlier buildings. The older features of the three-domed mosque are here repeated and multiplied so as to make a five-domed mosque. The facade shows five entrances, each separated from the other by slender minaret rising high above the battlemented parapet. Similarly the corner towers have their kiosks shooting above. The domes have basal leaf ornamentation and are crowned with tall finials. Above all we find a beautiful *do-chala* hut-roofed room added to the north of the mosque, which, with its drooping eves, gives beautiful appearance (pl. LXXII, No. 101). But the mosque

1. Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 101-2.
2. Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op. Cit.* P. 266

as a whole, hardly appeals to our sense of beauty. The repeatition of features, no doubt, adds to the richness in detail but has no inner appeal.

12. Khan Muhammad Mirdha's Mosque:- This is another mosque of the earlier type standing on a high platform 16½′ above the ground level, underneath which are vaulted rooms. The mosque derives its name from that of the builder, Khan Muhammad Mirdha, who constructed it in 1116 A. H. (A. D. 1706) at the order of Qazi Ibadullah.[1] The mosque (pl. LXXIII, No. 102) proper is smaller than the platform, which also has a hujra. The main mosque is of the three-domed type, but the features of the eighteenth century are writ large on it. It is oblong in plan, measuring 48′ long by 24′ wide, with corner towers elaborately heightened above the parapet and terminating in a ribbed cupola. The subsidiary pilaster minarets border the entrances and the projection of the mihrab at the back of the west wall. The eastern face of the wall shows profuse panelling, and ornamental merlons are seen at different stages of the parapet. The domes, though squat, stand on high shoulders, and as usual the central dome is bigger than the side ones. The reduction in the size of the side domes is achieved by an intermediary stage of pendentives—a techinque altogether different from those seen in the earlier mosques. The interior is divided into three bays by two lateral arches, each bay containing one decorated mihrab.

13. *Husaini Dalan* :- This is the religious building of the *Shias* in the *Shia* locality off Nazimuddin Road. Here the *Muharram* is celebrated with great pomp

1. Aulad Hasan, *Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca*, p. 25, Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op. Cit.* pp. 261-62.

and show. The date[1] of this building is not definitely known. It its present form it gives altogether a modern look, though some of the older features still survive. The *Husaini Dalan*, though a religious building, is not a mosque, and hence the essential elements of a mosque are not to be found there. Primarily it is meant for holding a meeting of the *Shia* community on religious occasions, when at times the *Khutbah* is also delivered by some famous *Maulana*. For this purpose it is necessary to have wide covered space. On the other hand the Muharram festival demands the distribution of the *Shirni* in another big hall. Thus the presence of the two halls are essential. At the *Husaini Dalan* these two halls, back to back, form the nucleus of the building. The *Shirni hall*, facing south, is coloured black indicating sorrow and mourning over the death of Hasan and Husain, the dear sons of Hazrat Ali. The Khutbah hall, facing north, has a *minbar* (pulpit) of seven steps made of wood, and on its wall are hung up many religious symbols of *Shias*, like the *Panjah* (sacred palm), the *Boraq* (the mythical animal), the photographs of *Imams* etc. To these two *dalans* have been added subsidiary halls in two storeys on the right and left probably meant for the ladies. In a portion of this hall is preserved an effigy of twin graves. The roof of this entire structure was rebuilt after the earthquake of 1897 and another verandah has been added to the southern side facing a tank. It is this southern face (PI.LXXIV, No. 103) which gives a picturesque appearance. The whole building, standing on a raised platform, as are some of the mosques of the eighteenth century, has wide frontage having four

1. For Controversy see Dani, *Op. Cit.* pp. 102—4. Munshi Rahman Ali, Op. Cit. pp. 270—72.

doric columns, made of brick and plaster, supporting the roof of the verandah, which is fronted by hollow towers in three stages placed one on either end. The parapet shows a row of coloured merlons, while the four corners are topped over by kiosks. The whole setting tries to evolve a style out of the 19th century features along with the few remnants of the older architecture. The attempt succeeds in giving us a building of breadth and clarity but at the sacrifice of the embellishments of the Mughal style. In its present form the building speaks of modernity, though the antiquity of the place may go backwards to the time of Shah Shuja.

14. *The Great Idgah :-* This is another type of a Muslim religious building used for yearly prayers during the occasion of the *'Id.* It stands on the side of the Satmasjid road near the 15th street. It was built by Mir Abul Qasim, the *Dewan* of Shah Shuja in 1050 A. H. (A. D. 1640)[1]. The *Idgah* is usually a single-walled mosque, the wall being on the western side meant to separate the *namazis* from the passers-by on the road. The present *Idgah* is situated on a raised spot, about 4′ high and originally had a curtain wall on all the four sides enclosing an area 245′ long by 137′ wide. The western wall still stands to a height of 15′, and contains in the middle a semi-octagonal mihrab with a four-centred stilted arch, decorated with multiple cusps applied to the outer face and flanked on either side by multi-cusped arched panels within frames. On either side of the central mihrab can be seen subsidiary shallow mihrabs which are preserved to some distance. The mihrab wall is topped with battlemented cresting. In the centre is the inscriptional tablet.

1. Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op. Cit.* pp. 273-74 ; Aulad Hasan, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 20-21

15. *Dhakeshwari Temple* :- This is the religious building of the Hindus and has been included here to illustrate the influence of the mosque architecture on the temple style. The old tradition[1] traces the history of the temple to the time of the Hindu king Ballal Sen. But the architectural style relegates it to a much later date. The temple complex is crowded with numerous structures of different periods. There are two groups of the main temples. The outer group has four tall-spired shrines in a row, showing all the features of the Mughal style. The spire consists of a series of *Chauchala* hut roof, superimposed one above the other, in gradually reducing tier, the whole makes a peculiar type of *Sikhara* (pl.XCII nos. 123-4) hardly known from any other place. This *Sikhara* is a peculiar development from the Bengali type of the hut roof. The inner group, which is the main shrine is entered through a nineteenth century gateway, and consists of a three-roomed shrine with a verandah in front ; the whole setting answering exactly the plan of a three-domed mosque with a verandah of the last Mughal period. Except for the fact that this building is aligned differently and that there is no mihrab, this temple could be mistaken for a mosque plan. Obviously this type of temple is a new development in the Hindu architecture. The roof (pl.XCII nos. 125-6) again shows greater ingenuity on the part of the architect. Each room is covered by separate roofs consisting of a series of Bengali *Chauchala* roof alternating with the north Indian segmented roof graded in a tier reducing as it goes upwards. This novel construction of the roof does not appear to have been copied elsewhere. The Dhakeshwari temple construction thus shows a peculiar development in the Muslim period in which many

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1. See Dani, *Op.Cit.* pp 123-24.

features of the Muslim architecture are incorporated and further show new departure.

(*II*) *Tombs*

The new developments in the tomb style are clearly seen in the existing examples at Dacca. From the simple single-domed square structure, as is seen in the *tomb of Bibi Champa*, we pass on to the segmented roof, noticed in the *tomb of Chishti Bihisti* or the flat-vaulted roof in the unknown tomb near *Satgumbad Mosque*. The other development includes an addition of a verandah to the single-domed structure, observed in the tombs of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz and Dara Begam. The more complicated structure is the *tamb of Bibi Pari*, which consists of nine rooms—one in the middle, four on the sides and four at the corners. Similarly *Bibi Mariam's tomb* in Narayanganj has a vaulted verandah on all the four sides of a single-domed square room. The plan of the last building is followed in a Sikh temple[1] at Dacca. but its roof is only vaulted.

15. Tomb of Bibi Champa :- Bibi Champa is said to be a concubine of Nawab Shaista Khan[2], and the tomb is reputed to have been built by the Nawab over her grave. It stands in the courtyard of the *Chhota Katra*, being hidden amidst many new constructions. It is a single-domed square building, measuring 24′ each side. The dome which is internally carried on squinches stands on a battlemented octagonal drum. Entrance is provided on all the four sides. The doorways are flanked with graceful tapering turrets standing upon inverted jars—the turrets giving emphasis to the entrances.

1. Dani, *Op. Cit*, pp. 121-23.
2. Hakim Habibur Rahman—*Asudgan-i-Dhaka*, pp. 56-57.

16. Tomb of Hazrat Chishti Bihishti : Hazrat Chishti Bihishti is an unknown figure[1]. It seems that originally the dead body of Islam Khan, the first Mughal governor of Dacca, was buried here before removal to Fathpur Sikri. The tomb stands in the compound of the High Court on a raised plinth. It is a square building covered with a segmented square roof of the north Indian type, but recent repairs have entirely changed the look of the building.

17. Unknown Tomb :- The tomb stands about 100 yards to the north east of the *Satgumbad mosque* near Muhammadpur Colony. The person buried is not

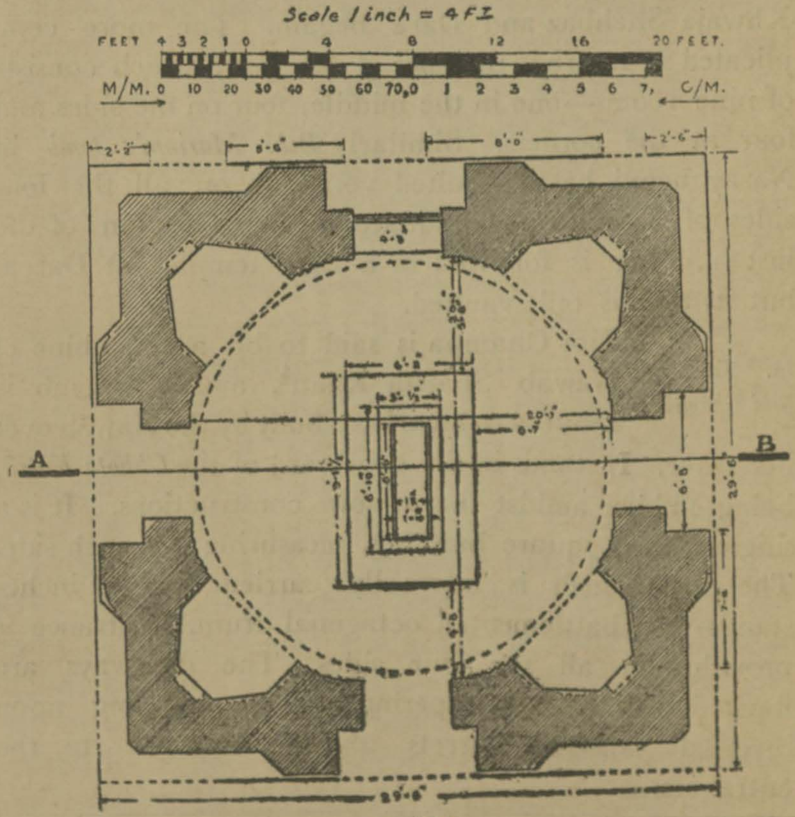
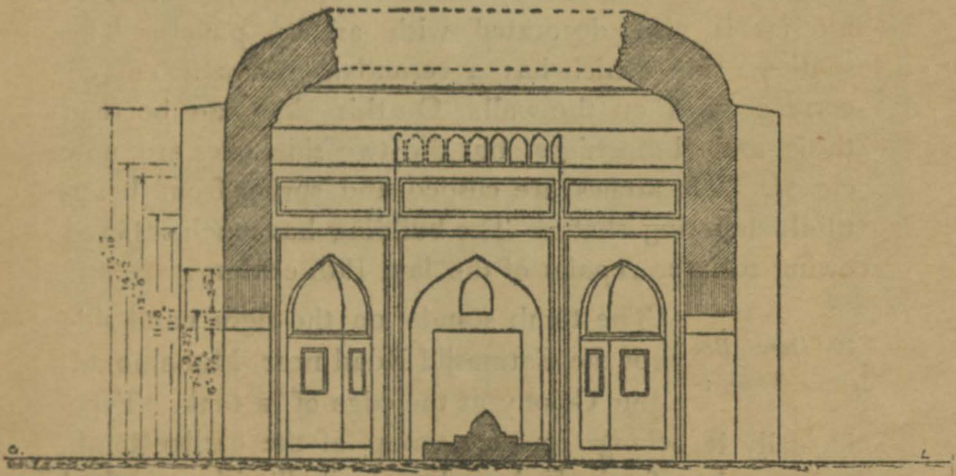


Fig 21

1. For controversy see Dani, *Op. cit.* pp. 92-93.

known, but Aulad Hasan[1] surmises that it entombs one of the daughters of Shaista Khan. Typologically it falls in the same category as the one described previously, but it is a highly embellished building preserving most of its features. The tomb stands on an elevated spot and makes a perfect square (Fig. 21). The walls are sufficiently thick. The entrance is kept on the south side. On the west is seen a mihrab and the other two sides were closed with stone window grills (pl. LXX, No. 99) now fallen off. The facade (pl. LXVIII, No. 95) makes a beautiful appearance with its numerous rectangular panelling and the multi-cusped arched opening prominently brought out in a projected surface. This surface is bordered with tapering fluted turrets. The interior shows a deep squinch at the four corners but the roof was flat resting on curved cornice[2] (Fig. 22). This type of flat vault is well-known from the time



Fig, 22

1. *Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca*. p. 41
2. The dotted circle for a dome shown in Fig. 21 is a mistake. This figure was supplied by the Department of Archaeology and could not be corrected.

of Shah Jahan onwards in the monuments at Agra and Delhi. The *Great Idgah* at Agra adopts this form in its stone construction. Here it is transplanted in brick and plaster. The building is now in a neglected condition.

18. Tomb of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz :- The tomb stands to the east of the *mosque of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz*. Principally it illustrates a single-domed square type of tomb, but on the southern side it has a vaulted verandah probably of the Bengali hut roofed type. The roof is now fallen. The main tomb (pl. LXI, No. 88) has a richly panelled facade with prominent projection for the arched doorway which opens under a half-dome. The corner towers are also panelled and are crowned with plastered kiosks. The dome, which has a beautiful finial, rests on an octagonal drum, and is internally carried on squinches. The interior is also decorated with arched panels. The southern side, which has a verandah, shows a curved cornice lined on the wall. On this side can be seen three arched openings, but the two side ones are now closed. The arches are cusped and spring from beautifully tapering shafts. The building has much suffered owing to later repairs of the late 19th century.

19. Dara Begam's Tomb :- The tomb stands on the right hand side of the Satmasjid Road near Muhammadpur Colony at the edge of a tank. Typologically it belongs to the group of the earlier tomb, as it consists of a single-domed square hall with a vaulted verandah added to the southern side (Fig. 23). But architecturally it is very poor. None of the ornamental panelling of the earlier tomb is found here (pl. LXVII, No. 94). The corner minaret is almost negligible and the door way shows a simple arched opening. No projected fronton

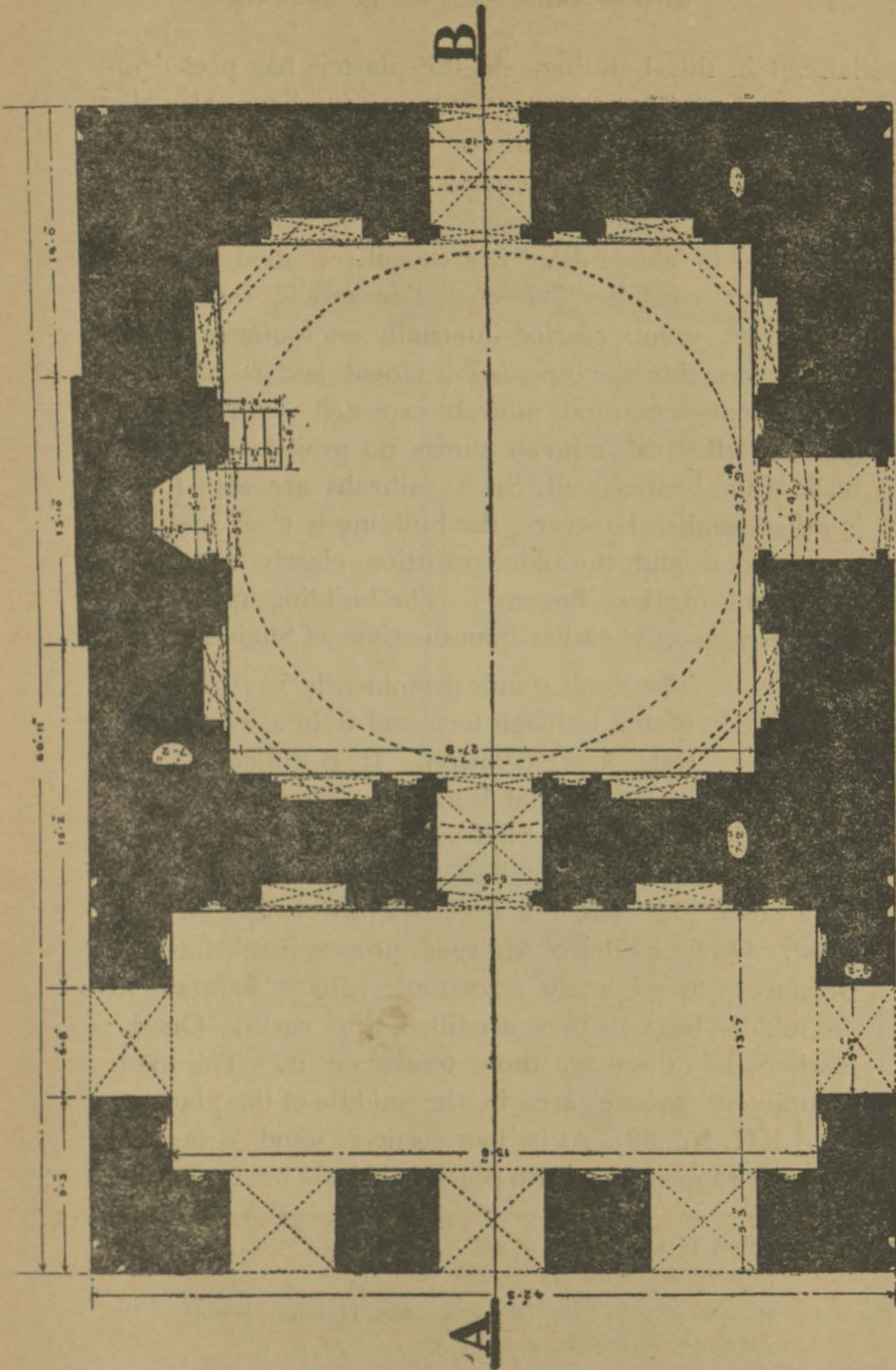


Fig 23

is seen in this building. As the plaster has peeled off, the ornamental merlons at the cornice have also disappeared. Only the facade of the vaulted verandah has some pretence of ornamentation. On this side there are three cusped arched entrances, each separated by deep niches, while above there is a row of rectangular panels. The square room is 27′ 7″ each side and is covered by the largest dome carried internally on squinches. On the western side the opening is closed and is provided with a semi-octagonal mihrab crowned with merlons (fig. 24). But this mihrab shows no projection at the back of the westen wall. Such mihrabs are also found in other tombs. However, the building is now used as a mosque, though the older tradition clearly regards it as a tomb of Dara Bagam[1]. The building appears to have been erected earlier than the time of Shaista Khan.

20. Tomb of Bibi Pari :- The tomb stands prominently in the middle of the Lalbagh fort and is in a very good state of preservation. It is difficult to say who Bibi Pari was. Local tradition remembers her as the daughter of Nawab Shaista Khan[2] who is also credited with the construction of the tomb. The tomb stands on a raised platform, the floor of which is flagged with stone. On four sides of the tomb proper, just before the entrance, was originally a reservoir with a fountain in the middle, but now they are filled with earth. On the southern side there are three tombs on it. The tomb occupies 60′ square area in the middle of the platform (pl. LXII, No. 89). At its four corners stand octagonal minarets topped over with plastered kiosks having ribbed

1. Aulad Hasan, *Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca*, pp. 32-33 ; Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op. cit.* pp. 272-74.

2. Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op. cit.* p. 363; Habibur Rahman, *Op. cit.* p. 95; Cunningham, *A. S. R.* vol. XV, p. 130.

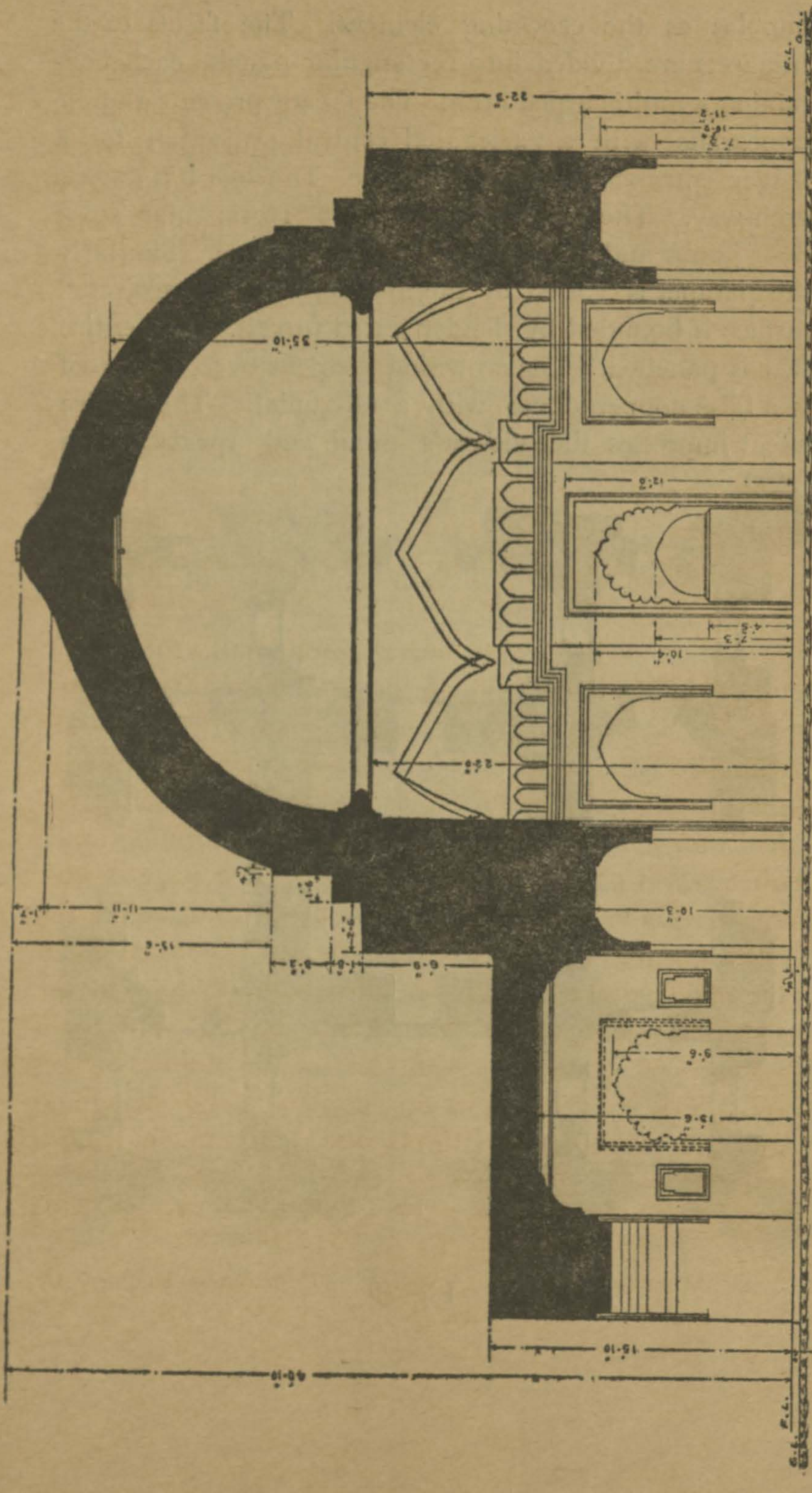


Fig 24

cupolas as the crowning element. The facets of the minarets are divided into rectangular panels, each containing a multi-cusped arch. The facade presents a noble appearance with a variegated central projection for a bigger entrance under a half-dome. The door has a stone arch-way. The side openings have rectangular stone door jambs and lintels with a window above. Similarly the parapet is varied in the middle, while the projected surface is bounded by slender fluted turrets. The entire face is panelled. The crowning element over the roof is a false copper dome with a tall finial. The entire effect impresses the viewer's mind and speaks of an

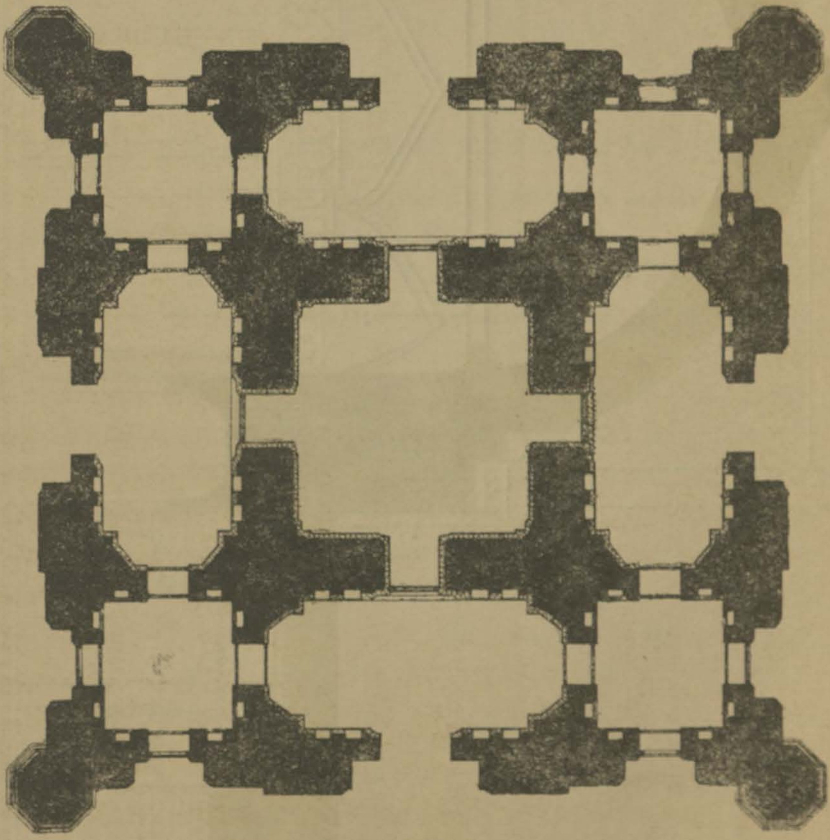


Fig 25

achievement of no mean order. Originally the copper dome was gilt. The interior is divided into nine rooms (Fig. 25), the central tomb chamber being 19′2″ square, the four corner rooms being 10′3½″ each side and the passage rooms being 24′8½″ by.10′8½″. This complicated plan is a new introduction in Bengal and is ultimately derivable from the Persian elements borrowed during the Mughal period in the buildings at Agra and Delhi. The tomb chamber is today entered only through the southern side, which is fitted with a stone door jamb and a door leaf of sandal wood. The leaf bears a pattern of Chinese cross. The other doors are fitted with marble screen (pl. LXXI, No. 100). The walls of this chamber are also faced with white marble while the floor is laid out in small patterns of black marble. In the middle lies the marble cenotaph made of three steps. The faces of the steps bear shallow foliaged design in relief, while thc top shows a *takhti* carved on it, which is a symbol of a female's grave. There is another grave in the south-east corner of room. The walls in the other rooms were also originally faced with marble to some height, and above this marble facing the surface was concealed behind encaustic tiles. But all these decorations are now gone. The ceiling of all the rooms is made of overlapping black basalt stone (Fig. 26). Even the central room shows the same type of construction. Moreover all the doorways are provided with rectangular door jambs and lintels, and they are not arched. This predilection for Hindu mode of construction is peculiar to this tomb, and has got nothing to do with the general style in Bengal. On the whole the building has been planned in a magnificent scale and every care has been taken to add a sense of grandeur and beauty to it.

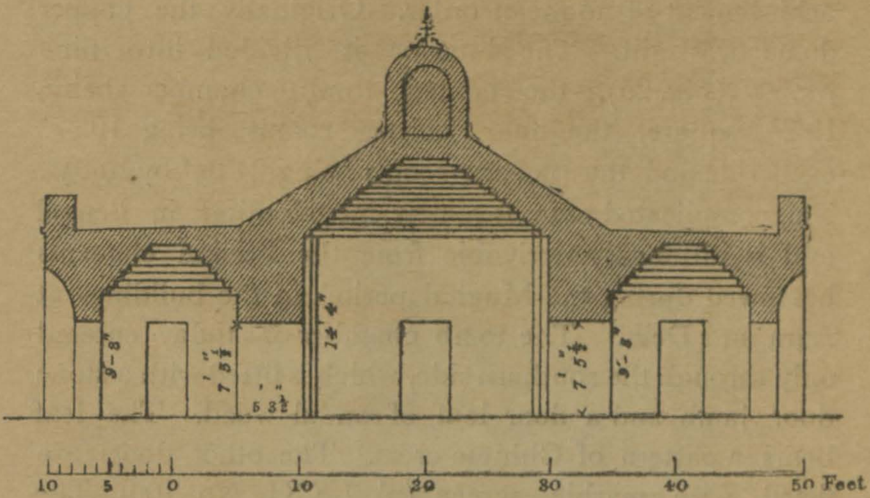


Fig 26

21. *Bibi Mariam's tomb* :- At Narayanganj in the Hajiganj locality stands this tomb just to the east of the mosque of Bibi Mariam. The tomb occupies another high spot in the middle of a quadrangle enclosed within a surrounding wall. It is in a very poor state of preservation, but whatever portion remains, brings it in the group of Bibi Pari's tomb. Here we have a central square room covered by a tall dome. On four sides of this room we find vaulted verandahs, the vaults having all fallen down, but some of the walls, pierced with arched doorways, are still in existence. The verandahs today are occupied by other graves of less importance, but inside the tomb chamber is a big masonry cenotaph of Bibi Mariam, who is otherwise hardly known.

(*III*) *The Katras in Dacca*

There are two *Katra* buildings in Dacca, the *Bara Katra* and the *Chhota Katra.* They take their origin from the *Caraven sarais* of north India and they serve the

same purpose. In plan as well they take the same form except that one wing of these buildings receives greater attention and is provided with second storey so as to accommodate men of higher rank.

22. Bara Katara :- *Bara Katra* (pl XCIII, No 127 is located on the southern side of the *Chauk* close to the river Buriganga, which formerly washed its feet. Now a crowd of modern buildings obstruct the view from the river. Originally the approach was from the river side and hence the river frontage is the most dominant part of the building. Figure 27 gives a plan of this wing. The northern wing is now completely gone. The eastern and southern sides are now encumbered with modern additions and it is difficult to separate the old from the new. As originally built, the *Bara Katra* enclosed a quadrangular courtyard with living rooms on all the four sides. Prominent gateways were built, one each on the north and south. The southern wing presents a magnificent river frontage, 223 feet long, and at one time must have been the most comfortable place to live with its refreshing river breezes. This wing of the building is planned in a grand scale and is embellished with all the features of the imperial Mughal style. It consists of a strong built three-storeyed gateway in the middle of the arm, the remaining portion being two-storeyed and bounded by prominently projected octagonal tower. The gateway is a lofty structure rectangular in plan with a projected fronton towards the river. The mass of this projection is reduced by a tall alcove rising up to the second storey. Its underside is decorated with plastered net-work. At the angle can be seen slender tall minarets and the wall surface in between is relieved with plastered panels showing a variety of forms including four-centred, cusped, horse-shoe

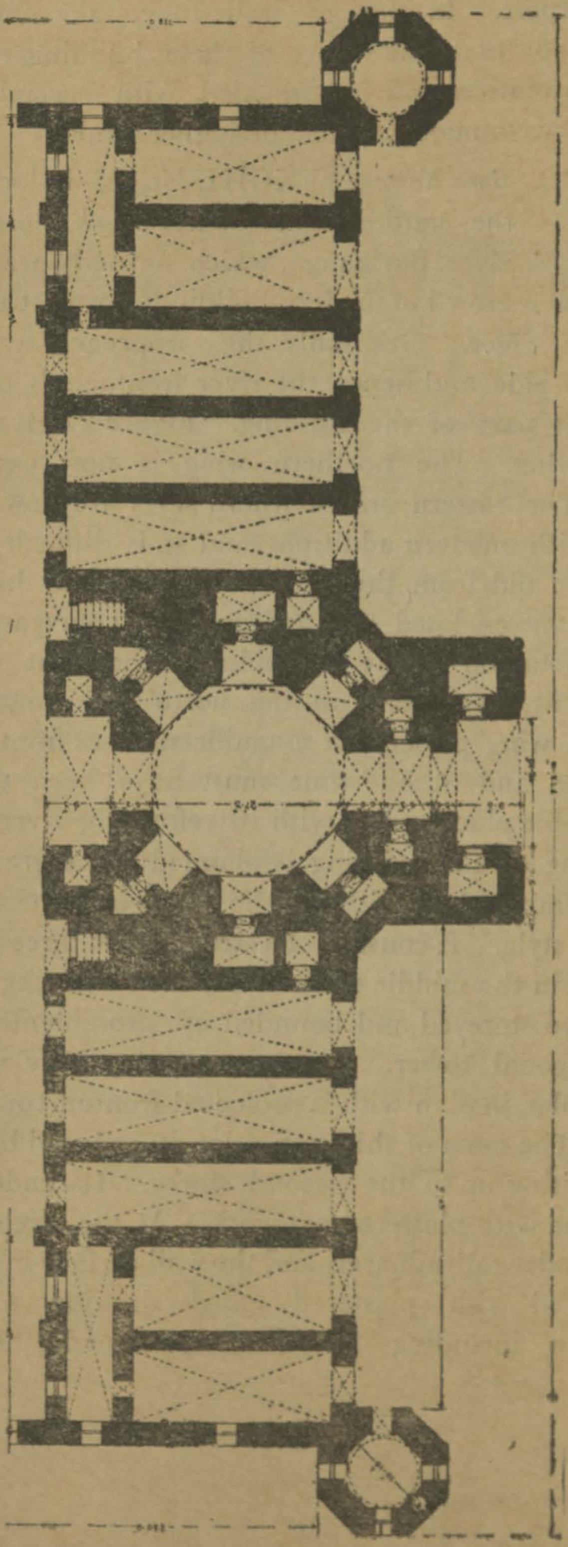


Fig 27

and flat arches. Above the apex of the alcove open the windows of the third storey. Under the alcove opens the main arched doorway which leads into the guard-room, and further we pass through two successive arch-ways into an octagonal domed hall, the ceiling of which is neatly plastered and bears various net-pattern and foliaged designs. Beyond this hall the archways repeat themselves and we are brought to the innerside of the *Katra*. On this inner side steps are provided that lead to the second storey. The two storeyed structure resolves, on either side of the gate, into a row of five barrel vaul-ted rooms in the ground-floor and the living rooms with a continuous verandah on the upper. Similarly the upper floors of the gateway are furnished with living rooms. The different storeys are demrcated by blind merlons carved in plaster. The corner towers are in three stages. They are hollow and can be approached from the subsidiary structures. The space within the tower is quite sufficient to accommodate a person. On the whole the surviving structures speak highly of the architect who gave a noble domeanour to the ordinary plan of a caraven sarai. And hence its builder, Abul Qasim, the *Dewan* of Shah Shuja had every right to declare :-

> "To this lofty building which proppeth high heaven
> By this slave Abul Qasim foundation was given.
> What a building ! It putteth high heaven to shame
> A copy of Paradise ye might it name."

The *Bara Katra* was built in 1053 A. H. (A.D. 1644)[1] for the residence of Shah Shuja but the prince endowed it to the builder Abul Qasim in 1055 A. H. (A.D. 1646), as is known from another inscription.

1. Aulad Hasan, *Op. Cit.* pp. 15-16, Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op. cit.* p. 269.

23. Chhota Katra:- This is situated about 200 yards east of the *Bara Katra* on the bank of the river Buriganga. It was built by Nawab Shaista Khan in A.D. 1663[1]. This *Katra* is of similar plan and structure as the *Bara Katra*, but it is smaller in size. Its northern and southern gateways, though much altered recently, are still in existence. The surrounding buildings around the courtyard also survive in many modern additions and alterations. The river frontage still catches the eye with its three-storeyed gateway but the new European style triple windows and the crowning minarets have taken away the very soul of the Mughal architecture. The inner side of the gateway has a new porch added in this century. The courtyard is now overcrowded with shop constructions at the present time. The building has now completely lost its original form and appearance.

(IV) FORTS

The riverine tract of Bengal demanded forts of a different kind which could stand attack from river. Hence the siege forts of north Indian type are few and far between. The lack of stone in the delta of Bengal thwarted any attempt to copy the fortified structures of Agra and Delhi. Here in Dacca we have only two kinds of fortresses, one which we can call as the palace fortresses and the other the river forts. In the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* we also read of mud forts at Dacca but they are no longer recognisable. There are only two palace fortresses preserved to some extent in Dacca. The oldest of them now survives in the modern jail. Except for the surrounding wall and the eastern gateway[2], which

1. Munshi Rahman Ali, *Op. Cit.* p. 269.
2. It was this gateway which was closed by Shaista Khan on his departure from Bengal only to be re-opened when the price fell to that level which prevailed at his time.

are also considerably altered, nothing remains within the fort. The other is the *Lalbagh fort*, which survives in its incomplete condition. As we observe today, these fortress enclosures are very weak. They provide only a curtain wall to the fair inmates living inside but they could hardly have served the purpose of defence. Of the river forts only three survive in the neighbourhood of Dacca. They were built at the junction of river routes to ward off the river pirates proceeding up the river to plunder and loot the city of Dacca.

24. Lalbagh Fort :- The fort is situated on the bank of the river Buriganga not far from the *Dhakeshwari temple*. The name *Lalbagh* is difficult to explain, except on the assumption that there was a garden on this spot before the fort came into existence, and this assumption receives support from the fact that the neighbouring locality is still called Kaserhatta (i.e.Qasr-hat = palace market). It is also known by the name of *Fort Aurangabad* as it was built during the reign of Aurangzeb in A.D. 1678 by Prince Muhammad Azam when he was viceroy of Bengal. The fort is incomplete, and it is difficult to understand why it was left in its present condition, though it is known from Sir William Hedges[1] that it was occupied by Nawab Shaista Khan. The surviving structure shows a long fortification wall on the southern side with a gateway at the south-east corner, and a further continuation of the wall on the western side. On the north there are remnants of two gateways, one of which is in line with the southern gate. Beyond the south-western corner there are the remains of the city gate. The southern wall shows a number of features. On this side can be seen a number of octagonal bastions projecting beyond

1. Henry Yule - *The Diary of Willian Hedges*, London, 1887-89, vol, I, pp, 43-44,

the wall and on the inner side we find earth filling up to the rampart level. Below this filling has been traced an underground cell, which probably led up to the outer bastion near the river. A well-decorated entrance leads into the cell. The bastion (pl XC, no. 121)near the southern gate shows different periods of construction. On excavating the rammed earth from within the bastion a passage was discovered, which appears to have provided an access to the soldiers into the interior of the wall and other bastions. However, this was closed later on and a wide gun platform was built as an outer ring of this bastion. A second storey of terrace wall was added all along this river front. Wherever this wall is preserved, it shows numerous door openings, and it is difficult to understand the purpose of such open doors in a fortification wall. This wall is decorated with number of sunk panels on the inner side while the blind merlons separate this terrace wall from the lower storey. As these constructions are found only on the western side of the southern gate, it seems that the buildings of the eastern half yet remained to be taken in hand. On this supposition this gateway is taken to be central in plan. In between this and the northern gate lies a masonary tank, which is in a very dilapidated condition. A little distance to the west of the tank is a two-storeyed building, which is remembered as an audience hall. On one side of this hall stand a few ruined structures said to be the *hammam*.

25. South gate :- This gate (pl. LX, No. 87), though incomplete was magnificently planned. To the west of the gate a curtain wall was added to accommodate reserve soldiers. The gate proper was designed in the true Mughal style complete by itself. It was to be three-storeyed in height when complete

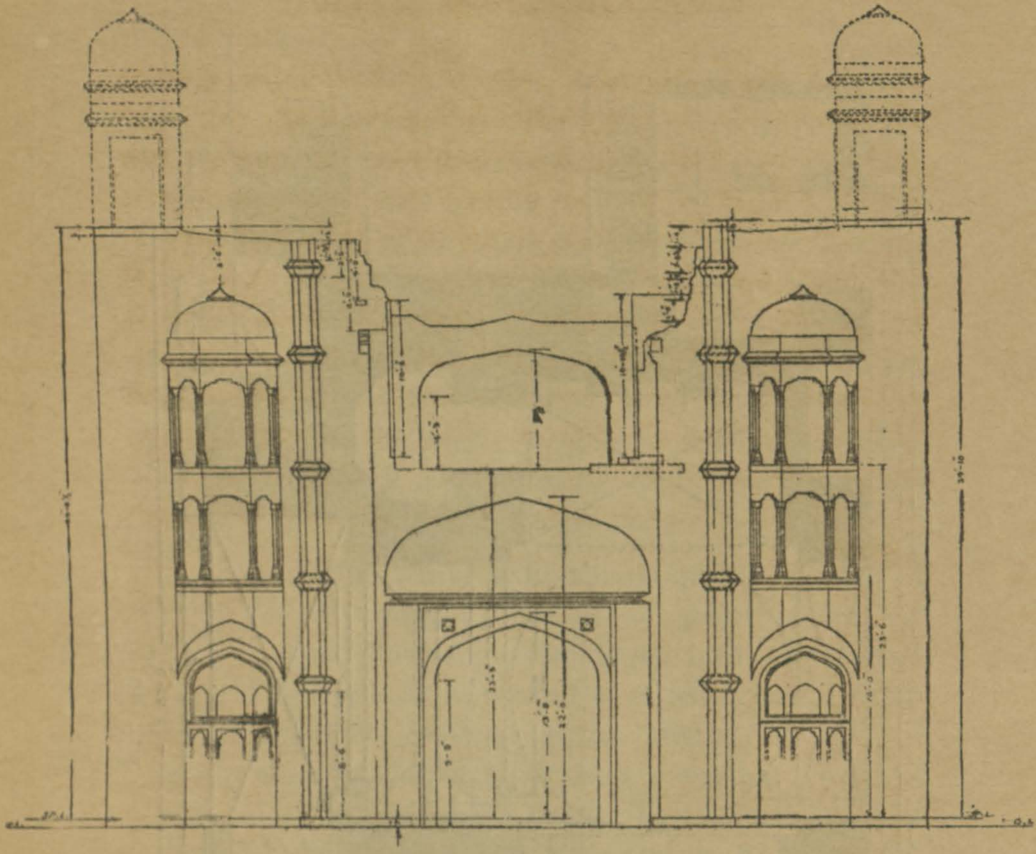


Fig 28

(Fig. 28). The elevation retains all the embellishing features of a Mughal gateway. A lofty archway to the top of the second story forms the nucleus of the elevation, which is emphasized by slender octagonal minarets that shoot up on either side. Beyond on the right and the left are to be seen a deep plastered semi-octagonal alcove below and an oriel window in two stages above with a cupola as its crowning element. The last storey gave way to a further series of doorway and other embellishments and on the top over the four corners were to be seen pillared kiosks majestically breaking the skyline, two of which still remain. Below the central

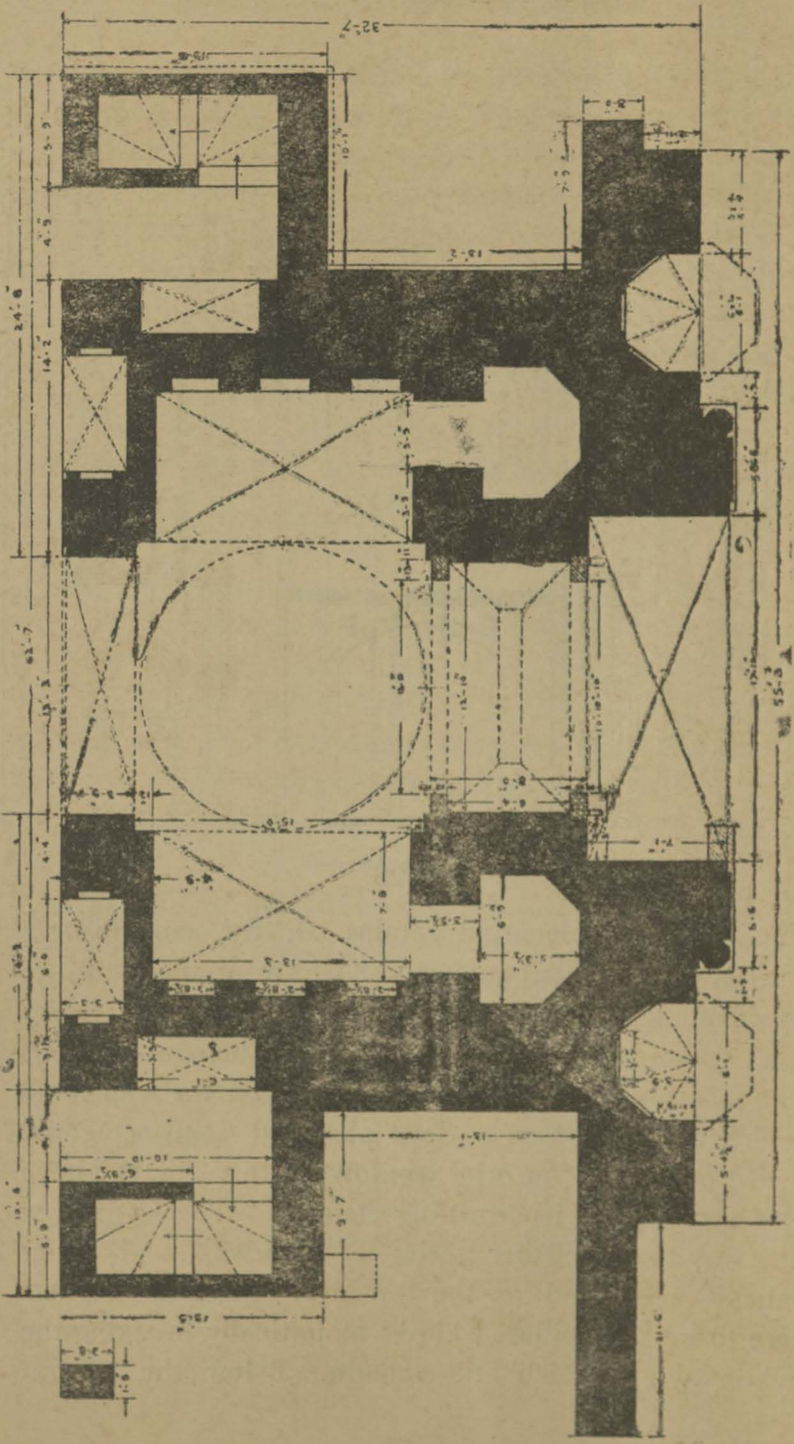


Fig 29

archway opens the door, inset with stone arch and having knob decoration at the spandrels. In plan (Fig. 29) the gateway provides all the necessary features. We pass through a succession of two archways into a domed square hall having subsidiary guard rooms. The underceiling of this hall shows net-pattern designs. The approach to the top storey was to be provided from the inner side of the fort, the space being still left on either side of the gate. But it seems that the steps yet remained to be built. The inner elevation is also quite appealing. On the whole the gate is much more pleasing for its graceful setting of the different parts. Its beauty is more feminine than masculine.

26. Hajiganj Fort :- It is situated in the Hajiganj locality of Narayanganj just at the point where the old Buriganga discharged into the Lakhya river. The fortification consists of a pentagonal curtain wall with rounded bastions at the angles and a small gateway towards the river side, suggesting that means of communication was by the river. The curtain wall has a rampart walk on the inner side and is itself pierced by several musketry holes. The bastions are filled with earth upto the rampart level and its merlons have wider holes in between suggesting that they were meant for gun firing at the pirates proceeding up the river. In a corner of the fort quadrangle is a free standing tall square column ofbrickwork. The present appearance is no doubt due to modern touch, but its presence links this fort with other waterforts of this time. Besides these, there is no other building within the fort. This suggests that it was occupied only during the rains when the pirates were expected and that the temporary occupants lived in tents. It may have been built soon after Islam Khan established the Mughal capital at Dacca.

27. *Sonakanda Fort* :- It is situated on the other side of the river Lakhya just at the point where formerly it met the river Brahmaputra. Now the river has shifted futher away from this place. The fort consists of the curtain wall with a number of bastions and an additional projection towards the riverside, where stands a round drum of huge dimension. The height of this drum is now much reduced owing to the levelling of the earth. But once it must have marked a dominant place at the junction of the river. It is suppossed that such a huge platform was meant to take up a long range gun which could shoot the pirate at a distance. No other building is seen inside the fort. It was probably built at about the same time as the above fort.

28. *Idrakpur fort at Munshiganj* The fort of Idrakpur was situated on the bank of the river Ichhamati now dried up. The river silt in some places has risen right up to the level of the parapet. This fort falls into two main parts, the wider open area surrounded by curtain walls with bastions at the angles and the smaller area containing a huge round drum (pl, LXXV, No. 104). Another series of curtain wall encloses this drum while an approach is provided from the bigger court. Just at the foot of the drum a small magazine is seen. On the top of the drum is placed today a residential quarter for the sub-divisional Officer, and the fort itself serves as the jail. It was probably built by Mir Jumla in about 1660.

V. THE BRIDGES

Large number of bridges are seen in the city of Dacca. They were erected by the Mughal governors or private individuals over *Khals* or *nalas* for military as

well as trade purposes. Of the private enterprise we have the bridge of Hayat Bepari and Khwaja Ambar's bridge[1], both of which are now dismantled. Another important bridge is that of Tongi, built by Mir Jumla in A.D. 1661[2]. All these bridges are of camber type and built in the typical Mughal style. The most important bridge, built by Mir Jumla, is what is now called as the *Pagla Pul*, lying about midway between Dacca and Narayanganj. It spanned the Dulai river (i.e. Buriganga), which has now shifted its course. Tavernier[3] calls the river as "Pagalu", and probably this name survives in that of the bridge. The bridge is in ruins (pl. LXIX, No. 98), but even in its present condition it has a romantic appeal. The construction speaks of the great Mughal taste. The bridge consisted of three open arches, each arch being four-centred and stilted, and a further blind arch at either end. The spandrels of the arches are decorated with prominent rosettes and the base of the arches is provided with semi-circular cut-waters. But of greater importance are four octagonal hollow towers, one at each corner. These towers have multi-cusped arched openings and are futher relieved with deep panels while a fluted dome crowns their heads. On the whole, even with the fallen towers, the romantic beauty of the architecture catches the eye.

26. *Conclusion* - The various types of buildings seen in Dacca, though in ruins, fairly well illustrate the imperial Mughal style that was introduced here after Dacca became the Mughal capital. Dacca cannot boast of priceless buildings of marble and other stones,

1. See Dani, *Op. cit.* pp. 110 and 131.
2. Munshi Raman Ali, *Op. cit.* pp. 278-79.
3. Tavernier, *Travels in India*. Eng. Trans. Calcutta, 1905, p.102.

but even in its brick and plaster work the Mughal features shine out clearly, and though new taste of beauty is quite evident in the style, still the architecture as a whole has compromised with local conditions. It is in this gradual adoption of the Mughal features that the buildings at Dacca give us the great lesson of history, and it is only because of this that the Mughal style survived till our own time.

CHAPTER XIII

LOCAL STYLES OF MUGHAL ARCHITECTURE

1. The Mughal Influence.

The imperial Mughal style of architecture, that was made popular in Dacca, did not penetrate far deep into the mofussil areas of Bengal. The lack of communication and the dearth of the masons tended to the continuation of the Pre-Mughal tradition. But in the cities, where the Mughal administration demanded the presence of a large number of new officers or where new migration of population could take place, the new style was gradually adopted. This adoption depended upon the availability of technical help as well as of the material for construction. Judging from the number of mosques rebuilt during the Mughal period, it will not be an exaggeration to say that the new technical knowledge rapidly spread in the province. We find in these reconstructions a clever re-utilization of the older material, and it is mainly in these buildings that the Pre-Mughal features survive and a peculiar local element is added to the Mughal style. Sometimes in the remote areas the plastered walls are seen, and the construction of the dome follows the Mughal technique, but the older design of curved battlements is kept up. The carved brick decoration also survives in a few buildings, but majority of them show the new Mughal style of wall panelling The corner minarets generally shoot high above the parapets and are topped over by plastered kiosks, while the dome is crowned by a tall beautiful finial The three-domed mosque is generally adopted, but the single-domed is seen more commonly, as it was

cheaper to build them. These features are now traced in the buildings found in different parts of Bengal. The attempt will be to localise the features and see the evolution of a definite style, if any, in the different regions of Bengal.

2. *Dacca District*

Mirpur

There are several localities in the neighbourhood of Dacca where old *dargahs* are present. In these places there is invariably a mosque, not as old as the tomb of the saint itself, but of a date generally falling during the Mughal period. Sometimes the tomb itself is repaired and renovated so as to suit the new taste. One such tomb of Shah Ali Saheb stands at Mirpur about twelve miles away from Dacca beyond the Muhammadpur Colony. Nothing very particular is known about the saint. The current tradition is that about 400 years ago Shah Ali, a prince of Baghdad, having renounced the pleasures of the world, came with forty disciples and lived in a small mosque at this place. The original mosque was probably built in A.D.1480, as an inscription hung up over the tomb records this date. But the present mosque is completely renovated. The saint is said to have died in 1577. According to the local tradition, sometime after his interment an unknown merchant, who made large profits in his business in the neighbourhood, attributed his fortunes to the mediation of the saint, built this present mausoleum. It is a square building 36 feet outside measurement and about the same in height with walls 7 feet thick. It contains the grave of the saint in its centre. The walls are surmounted by a single large dome with four small minarets at its four corners. Over the central doorway are two stone inscriptions ; one speaks of the

construction of a mosque, and the other of the tomb in the Mughal period. The walls of the tomb are plastered and the parapet, which is straight, has blind merlons, but the doorway is very small and speaks of the Pre-Mughal style. The dome is internally carried on pendentives[1].

Qadam Rasul at Nabiganj

Nabiganj is a small marketting town on the eastern bank of the river Lakhya opposite Narayanganj. The name Nabiganj is of recent origin. Its name, as given by Mirza Nathan,[2] was Rasulpur, and also Qadam Rasul. Mirza Nathan also points out that this name originated from the fact of the *Qadam Rasul*, i. e. foot-print of the Prophet, being deposited here. He informs that the foot-print "was obtained by Masum Khan Kabuli from the merchants who brought it from Arabia on payment of a large sum of money." The story given by Sayid Aulad Hasan[3] regarding the discovery of the foot-print by Dewan Munawwar Khan and ultimately the erection of the building here by him, is not corroborated in historical account. The shrine is enclosed within a compound wall, to which a double-storeyed gateway provides an entrance. The gateway, which was built by Ghulam Muhammad, son of Ghulam Nabi, in A.D.1814, gives a picturesque appearance from the river side. In style the gateway tries to copy the Mughal features. It is a double-storied gateway standing high on a raised spot, to which a flight of paved steps gives an access. The gate is characterised by a tall arched entrance in the middle with projecting oriel windows on the sides with an open pavilion

1. Dani, Op. cit. p. 159 ; *List of Ancient Manuments in Bengal*, Calcutta, 1896 (to be quoted hereafter as *List*), pp. 205—6.
2. *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi*, vol. II, p. 710.
3. *Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca*, pp. 59—61.

in the second storey and a crenellated parapet above. The whole face is now decorated with enamelled pieces. At the step lie two old architectural stones ; one faceted pillar and the other a carved door lintel. The main shrine, which is an ordinary square building with a small verandah on the east, was built by Ghulam Nabi in 1758. Besides the main shrine, there are ruins of a *langar Khana* (alms house) to its south; to the north are the ruins of a house built by the Nawabs Nasrat Jang and Ghaziuddin Haidar; and to the east are the ruins of a *hujra*, where the pious people spend their time in prayer and religious meditation. A new mosque has also been built within the compound[1].

Sonargaon

Sonargaon, or more correctly *Suvarnagrama*, lies three miles east of Narayanganj. Literally it means "Gold Town". The city is obviously of Hindu origin, but its early history is not yet definitely known. Its position on the bank of the Meghna gave it the first importance as an inland port-town in the medieval history of Bengal. During this period it rose to be the political capital of East Bengal. The first definite reference to this city is found in the *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* of Ziauddin Barni, who speaks of the friendly relation of Rai Danuj of Sonargaon with Ghiyasuddin Balban, the Delhi emperor at the time of the latter's visit to East Bengal in A.D.1281. Ibn Battuta came to Sonargaon in about 1345, and here he embarked on a vessel that took him direct to Java. The Chinese ambassadors to the court of Bengal Sultans came to this place in early fifteenth century A.D. They record that Sonargaon was "a walled place with tanks, streets, bazars, and which carries on a business in all

1. Dani, *Op-cit.*, pp. 155—56.

kinds of goods," and add that "all goods are collected here and distributed." In aoout 1588 Ralph Fitch came to Sonargaon. He writes, "Sonargaon is a town six leagues from Sripur, where there is the best and finest cloth made of cotton that is in all India. The chief king of all these countries is called Isa Khan." After the establishment of the Mughal capital at Dacca the political importance of Sonargaon came to an end and the city gradually dwindled into an unrecognisable village, especially after the collapse of its muslin industry[1].

Panch Pir Dargah

The *dargah* is standing near the *tomb of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah* (pp.72-73) within a compound wall, close to which is a mosque which has been renovated recently. The graves of the five *pirs* are placed parallel to one another, and are raised about four feet from the ground. At the head of the graves is a *Chiraghdan* (lamp post) built of brick masonry with a Bengali hut-shaped cap. The same material is used for making the graves. The age of these graves, the names of the holy men, and the country whence they came are unknown[2]. The mosque stands at the south-west corner. It is a single-domed square building with corner towers, plastered walls and straight parapets—the style places it in the late Mughal period.[3] Architecturally these constructions cannot be older than the seventeenth centry A.D., but one of the five *pirs* is referred to as *PirBadr*, probably Shaikh Badruddin Auliya who is known to have lived in 14th-15th century A.D. The antiquity of the place may go back to this date.

1. Dani, *Op. cit.* pp. 152—53.
2. For detail, See A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Dacca, 1959, pp. 167-68.
3. James Wise, '*Notes on Sonargaon, Eastern Bengal*, in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1874, p. 88. List. p. 208.

Mograpara

The tradition about this place is thus noted by James Wise. "The village of Magrapara is considered by the natives of Sunargaon to be the site of the ancient city. It has in its immediate neighbourhood several undoubtedly old buildings, and within a short distance is an eminence which still bears the name of "Damdamah", or fort. This mound, which has a magnificent tamarind tree growing on its top, is circular, but no traces of fortifications are visible. It has been used for many years by the Muhammadans as their "Ashur Khanah" during the Muharram. On the tenth day, all the garlands and ornaments that are made in place of *ta'ziyahs* are here collected and admired by the people[1]."

Tomb of Manna Shah Darvesh.

In the centre of the village of Mograpara can be seen a grave of Manna Shah within an enclosure. There is no covering on the roof. But the saint is very popular. His date is unknown, but probably of the medieval period.

The Khanqah :

At a short distance on the north are the remains of the *Khanqah* of Shaikh Muhammad Yusuf, in which can be seen the tombs of Shaikh Yusuf himself and his son Shaikh Mahmud. The tombs are rectangular in plan with plastered walls and the roofs have *Chauchala* covering of the Bengali type. The saint came from Persia in about 16th century A.D. and the family had a tremendous influence in the locality in the succeeding centuries.

The Mosque :

Nearby stands a mosque with an inscription dated in 1112 A.H. (A.D.1700). James Wise records that the mosque was probably built by Shaikh Yusuf but a closer examination shows that it is a reconstruction of the older building. The

1. James Wise, *Op. cit.* p. 89.

original mosque was built in the reign of Jalaluddin Fath Shah in A.H.889 (A.D. 1484), the inscriptional tablet being still preserved at the compound wall opposite the mosque. The original building was a single-domed square structure with stone mihrab on the west and stone pillars, on which rested the dome. These stone materials are still preserved and have been reused in the later Mughal building, which follows the original plan. But it is now a plastered building with walls 6 feet thick and the parapet straightened. The dome is carried on pendentives and the stone pillars are not serving any constructional purpose. But the cornice shows the curved outline of the original shape and the entrance is very insignificant. It is a good example of the renovation of the old mosques in the Mughal period.

Other ruins: James Wise mentions that close to the tomb of Shaikh Yusuf is a ruined gateway called the *Naubat Khana*, now completely modernised, where musical instruments were sounded morning and evening to announce to travellers and *faqirs* that a place of shelter was at hand. At the back of the mosque are the ruins of a house called the 'Tahwil' or treasury, now a barren open ground, where feasts were given by the *mutawalli* of the mosque. Still further to the north-west are the ruins of the dwellings of the *Khondkars*. Two sets of buildings can still be seen there in ruins. One was a double-storied building used for residential purposes, and the other shows one big hall with its wall preserving the net-pattern design in plaster. The latter building was used as a madrasah.

In the *mahallah*, north of Mograpara, called Gohatta, is the tomb of a very celebrated *Pir*, known as Shah Abdul Ala, alias *Ponkai Dewana*. It is narrated that he retired to the forest, where he sat for twelve years so absorbed in

his devotions that he was unconscious of the lapse of time. This *Pir* must have died near the end of the 18th century, as his son Shah Imam Bakhsh alias Chulu Mian came, within the recollection of many living, from Sylhet to die at Sonargaon. Father and son lie buried close together. At the head of the former is placed the lattice-stone on which he spent his memorable twelve years. The tombs are otherwise of no interest. They are merely mud heaps kept carefully clean and covered over with a grass thatch[1].

Beyond the village of Habibpur, on the right-hand side of the district road, is the tomb of *Pagla Shah*. It is an old insignificant building. Various stories are told of the reason why this *Pir* received such a singular name. One is that he became light-headed, from the intensity of his devotions. This tomb is so venerated that parents offer at it the *Choti* or queue of their children when dangerously ill[2].

Gharibullah's Mosque is situated on an elevated mound surrounded by a moat in the village of Sadipur about half a mile north east of Mograpara in the Sonargaon Pargana. It was erected by Shaikh Gharibullah, formerly an examiner of cloth to the East India Company. It bears the date 1182 A. H. (A.D 1768). Its pinnacles are made of glazed pottery, but the building generally is plain, and devoid of interest[3].

The *Painam bridge* is a fine Muslim bridge over a *khal* on a village road from Hajiganj to Baidyer Bazar. It has three arches, the middle arch is higher than those at the sides and is intended for the passage of boats. The bridge is of the Mughal period and is of the Camber type.

1. James Wise, *Op. cit.* p. 90.
2. *List.* p. 214.
3. *Ibid*, p. 214.

The roadway is very steep and is formed of bricks circularly arranged. There is also a smaller bridge leading from the same road over a branch *Khal* to the main street of Painam village. The roadway of this bridge is also formed of bricks arranged circularly and kept in place by several large pillars of basalt laid flat at the toe or end of the arches. This bridge has towers at its sides which originally flanked a gateway[1].

About four miles away from this place in the village of Goaldih there stood two mosques. One was built in 1116 A.H. (A.D.1705) by Abdul Hamid. It was a single-domed square structure built typically in the Mughal style, but of late it has been renovated. About hundred yards to the south of this mosque stood the oldest mosque of this region, having been built in 925 A. H. (A. D. 1519) during the reign of Alauddin Husain Shah. Today it makes a huge heep of earth; but within the mound lie buried the beautifully carved mihrab stone, the ornamented pillars and many other floral motives on brick. The original mosque is described thus :—"The interior of the mosque is 16½ feet square. The four walls, as they ascend, give place to the eight walls of an octagon. At each croner are quarter domes or arches (i. e. squinch arch) , and the dome rises from the pendentives. As usual there are three mihrabs or arched recesses. The centre one is formed of dark basaltic stones beautifully carved and ornamented with arabesque work. The two side ones are of brick, boldly cut and gracefully arranged. The bricks in the archways have been ground and smoothed by manual labour. The pillars at the doorways are sandstone[2]."

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1. *List*, p. 216.
2. *List*, p. 216 ; James Wise, *Op. cit.* p. 92.

Thana Srinagar

At Pathorghata another type of mosque is noted. It was built in 1102 A. H. (A. D. 1690-91) by one Anwar, a courtier of Emperor Aurangzeb. It is an oblong building, measuring 34′ by 20′. It is covered over by a large central dome.

The bridge at Taltola is wrongly attributed to Ballal Sen. Its construction is typically of the Muslim period. It consisted of three arches of masonry, of which 2 were of 15 feet opening each and the other of 30 feet. The large arch was blown up by gun powder during the first years of the English rule[1].

Munshiganj Thana

There are a good number of old mosques in this *thana*, but most of them have been renovated. At Mir Kadim there is a strong bridge of masonry spanning the Mir Kadim Khal. It is also wrongly attributed to Ballal Sen. The bridge consists of a centre arch of 14 feet span and 28 feet in height above the bed of the Khal, with two side arches of 7 feet 3 inches span each and 17 feet high. The piers are 6 feet thick. The wings are straight back and the whole length of the bridge is 173 feet[2].

3. Sylhet District

Sylhet is a well-known place in East Pakistan for its celebrated *Dargah of Shah Jalal*, who, it is related, conquered the place with his followers, supplemented by the troops of the then Bengal ruler Shamsuddin Firoz

1. *List*, p. 220
2. *List*, pp. 219-20

Shah (A. D. 1301-22)[1]. The *Dargah of Shah Jalal* is beautifully situated on a hillock in the northern part of the town. It may be that underneath the Muslim monuments lie buried Pre-Muslim ruins. There are large number of inscriptions in the *Dargah*, that speak of the construction of mosques in different periods, but the existing buildings do not go beyond the 17th century The benefactions made to the *Dargah* tended to renovate the old buildings. The photo (pl. LXXXIV No. 115) gives a general view of the *Dargah* from the eastern side. On the left hand side stands a three-domed mosque built of brick and plaster during the *Foujdarship* of Bahram Khan in 1157 A. H. (A. D. 1744). A modern verandah has been added to the eastern side of the mosque. The original mosque has four corner towers rising above the parapets, which are battlemented. The domes, which have tall finials, rest on crenellated drums. The eastern face shows three doors, the middle one is bigger than the others, but it is not projected nor do we find here any higher arch. The next building, popularly known as *Bara Gumbad*, was built by Amil Farhad Khan in 1088 A. H. (A.D. 1677). It is difficult to understand the purpose of this building unless, of course, it was meant for a tomb. It is a single-domed square structure with octagonal corner towers, which rest on inverted jars and have several bands of moulding. But they appear to be stunted as their tops have disappeared. The eastern side shows three entrances, the central one bigger than those on the sides. Each of them is framed and has an outer cusped arch applied from the outside. The central door has a flat-arched opening. In between the doors a small niche is placed, while an inscriptional tablet tops

1. For details see *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, vol. II, 1957 PP. 64-68 ; Mufti Azharuddin Ahmed, History of Shah Jalal and His Khadims, Sylhet 1914

the central door. The parapet, which is faced with blind merlons, above the cornice moulding, as we find in the Mughal style, is peculiarly curved following the Bengali style. The dome, which has a finial, rests on an octagonal battlemented drum. The interior makes a chaste hall with the under-ceiling of the dome decorated. There is no other opening in this building, nor do we find any mihrab on the west. Behind the *Bara Gumbad* to the right is a small three-domed mosque of the Mughal style, rebuilt in the last century by Mr. Wellis, a Magistrate and Collector of Sylhet. The mosque is a smaller version of the one described above. This mosque forms a part of an enclosure, in the middle of which stands the masonry grave of the famous saint. The four corners of the enclosure are marked by tall but tapering pillars, which hold a cloth canopy over the grave. On the same height are to be seen two more enclosures, where we find the *Chillah Khana* of the saint and graves of his other companions. In front of this hillock on the eastern side extends on open courtyard having a flight of steps on one side leading up to the *Bara Gumbad.* Close-by is the ablution pond containing coloured fishes. On the northern side of the courtyard is a *langar Khana* (alms house) of the saint, where food is distributed free to the poor. It is here that we find two large cauldrons used for cooking food for large number of people. On the east is the main gate, which had originally a beautiful domed building of the Mughal design, built by Mr. Wellis, but it fell down in the earthquake of 1897. The upper storey of this gate was used as a *Nakkar Khana.* Beyond this compound on the other side of the hillock is situated the famous well of the saint called *Chashma.* Its water is considered sacred by the Muslims of the district. The well stands within a spacious square enclosure of brick walls. The whole of the ground within the enclosure is paved. In front of

the well stands a rectangular basin to receive the water that comes out through two pipes of the well continuously in all seasons. An outlet on the northern side takes out the over-flowed water.

About four miles away from Sylhet on way to Jaintiapur there is another *Dargah of Shah Poran* (probably Burhan). The *Dargah* is perched on the top of a small hillock about a mile away from the main road. A flight of steps leads up to the top. In an enclosure of brick masonry lies the grave of the saint, about whom nothing definite is known. The sarcophagus is always covered with a red cloth. At the head of the grave stands a *Chiragh-dan* (lamp post). To the west of this tomb lies a beautiful three-domed mosque of the late Mughal period. The mosque (pl LXXXIII, No 114) is oblong in plan with faceted corner towers shooting high above the parapets and terminating in a finial. The eastern facade is richly panelled and shows three arched entrances. The central doorway, which is bigger than the side ones, has cusps applied on the outside and is contained within a projected surface with slender circular pillars at either end. The parapet is faced with blind merlons, and the roof is covered with three domes, the central one bigger. The interior makes a chaste hall with decorated mihrabs. One inscriptional tablet is fixed over the central mihrab. The domes are internally carried on squinches and the reduction in the size of the side domes is achieved by an intermediary of pendentives. On the whole this Mughal mosque, though repaired in recent times, smacks of antiquity by its short doors and thick walls.

4. *Chittagong*

Chittagong was conquered last of all in Bengal by the Mughals from the Arakanese rulers in A. D. 1666

during the viceroyalty of Amirul Umra Nawab Shaista Khan and was renamed Islamabad. This conquest is fully described by the contemporary historian, Shihabuddin Talish in his *Fath-i-Ibriya*[1]. The following description of Old Chatgaon is taken from this book :—"Chatgaon is a tract adjacent to Bengal and Arracan alike. From Jagdia, where there was a (Mughal) outpost, to Chatgaon lay a wilderness. On the skirt of the hill was a dense jungle, without any vestige of habitation or living being. The river Feni, rising in the hills of Tipperah, passes by Jagdia[2] and falls into the ocean. Ninety-nine nullahs, which contain water even in seasons other than the monsoon intervene between Feni and Chatgaon. After the capture of Chatgaon, bridges (pul) were built by Shaista Khan's order over all these nullahs. From Dacca to Chatgaon six creeks (*Bahar*) have to be crossed in boats; one of them is the river of Sripur, which is so broad that a boat can perform only one trip across it and back in the whole day.

"On the bank of the Karnafuli river are some hills, high and low, situated close to each other. The lower hills have been heaped over with earth and raised to the level of the higher ones; all these hills have been scarped cylindrically, fortified, and named the fort (of Chatgaon). In strength it rivals the rampart of Alexander, and its towers (*buruj*) are as high as the falk-ul-baruj. Fancy cannot sound the depth of its moat, imagination cannot reach its niched parapet.

"In the fort has been dug a deep ditch about eight yards in breadth; on the eastern side, close to the edge of the ditch, flows the river Karnafuli, which descends from the Tipperah hills to the sea. On the north side is

1. The text is now being edited under the auspices of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan.
2. In Rennell's *Atlas*, sheet 1, Jagdia is on the Little Feni River.

a large wide deep tank close to the ditch. Behind the tank, along the entire north side and a part of the western side, are hills. The hills are so high and the jungle so dense, that it is impossible to traverse them even in imagination. Within the fort two springs flow, the water of which runs into the Karnafuli river in the monsoons, when the channel of the springs becomes so broad that a *Jalba* boat can easily pass through it. As the people of the fort use all the water (that issues) in seasons other than the rainy, they dam the springs and block the outlet to the Karnafuli river. On a height within the fort is a tomb, known as the *astana* of Pir Badar; the attendants of the shrine perform prayer and fast. The Magh infidels ....have settled some villages in *waqf* on this tomb; they make pilgrimage to the holy dead and offer presents. It is said that if one could perform the impossible feat of dragging a large gun to the top of the hill at the western angle (of the fort) which adjoins Tipperah—its balls would fall within the fort. On the other side of the Karnafuli there is a lofty and strong fort, opposite the fort of Chatgaon; it is full of defence-materials[1]." Originally it was first occupied by Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah in about the middle of the 14th century A. D.[2] But many a time it changed hands between the kings of Arakan, Tripura and Bengal. Once again it was conquered by the crown Prince Nusrat Shah[3] during the reign of his father Alauddin Husain Shah (A. D. 1493-1519). During the troubles that followed the early rule of the Mughals in Bengal, it again relapsed into the hand of the Arakanese kings. And it was from this place that the river pirates used to go up the Meghna and plunder the interior of

1. J.N. Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India, Calcutta,* 1919, PP. 120-21.
2. *Ibid.* p.122
3. Hamidullah, *Ahadis ul-Khwanin,* pp.17-8

Bengal. That piracy was finally crushed by the conquest of Shaista Khan.

Nothing of the old fort now remains at Chittagong except the name Andhar-Qila, correctly *Andar-Qila* (the inner fort). It was completely destroyed and burnt by the Mughals. But the *dargah of Badr Alam* is still preserved on the top of a hill and is today respected by the people in the neighbourhood. The only relic of old in the heart of the city is the *Jami Mosque*, built by Buzurg Umed Khan, the eldest son of Shaishta Khan, the conqueror of Chittagong. The mosque to-day stands in the busiest part of the city occupying a high hill. As originally built, it was a typical three-bay Mughal mosque of the Shaista Khani style. But there is only one dome over the central bay and the side bays are roofed over by cross vaults. Subsequently when Umed Khan left the place, the mosque became dilapidated owing to the indifference of his naibs and other officials. The English then took possession of it and by opening a door through a wall, converted it into a magazine for the storage of arms and ammunition. In the year 1853 the principal residents of Chittagong headed by Maulvi Hamidullah Khan, petitioned the government for the restoration of the mosque to the Muslim community, and Government having granted their prayer in the year 1855, it has since been used as a mosque[1]. But in the act of restoration many of the old features were altered. After the Independence of 1947 the mosque has been enlarged and given completely a new look.

The best preserved building in Chittagong is the *Qadam-i-Mubarak Masjid* (pl. LXXXII, No 112), situated at Rasulnagar in Rahmatganj. It was built by Muhammad Yasin in 1136 A. H. (A. D. 1719). It consists of a three-domed mosque proper and attached rooms on the

1. List pp. 229-30

north and south, the northern one containing the foot-print of the Prophet and the southern one that of the Ghaus Pak. The mosque shows the late Mughal style. It is oblong in plan with thick octagonal corner towers rising above the parapets. The eastern side has three arched entrances, each doorway opening under a high cusped arch, the central one being bigger, contained within a projected surface, with a slender fluted pillars on its either side. Each doorway has a frame of rectangular panels, and the side frames are topped over by crenellations. The parapet, which is straight, is battlemented. The domes have a basal ornamentation and tall finials. The central dome is exceptionally bigger than the side ones. The attached rooms have a modern appearance. The latticed windows and the over-hanging cornice are clearly later restorations. The roof shows a segmented covering of the north Indian type with a finial on the top. On the whole the mosque, though kept in a constant repair, still retains the Mughal features and the Mughal design.

At Chaumohani, where the four roads meet, there is another old mosque in the Mughal style, built by Wali Khan in A. D. 1790. The mosque has been completely overhauled. Outside the city in an open area, called *Bagh-i-Hamza* there stands an old mosque, called *Hamza Khan's mosque*, built in 1136 A. H. (A. D. 1719). The roof of the mosque fell down, and it has now been completely remodelled.

About four miles away from the town there stands the famous *darghah of Hazrat Bayazid Bostami*, though the saint is never known to have come to the east. The local historian Hamidullah Khan regards the *Dargah* as fake. But there is no doubt that the *Dargah* attracts large number of the Muslim population from the

neighbourhood. The tomb, which is a simple square structure, stands on a mound, which contains many bricks of old and possibly some old graves. In the neighbourhood, at the foot of the mound is what is known as *Aurangzeb's Mosque* (pl LXXXII, No 111) built in the early eighteenth century A. D. The mosque is well maintained, and shows a richly decorated facade on the east. The central doorway is given too much prominence by fluted turrets that bound the projected surface. The main doors are rectangular, that open under cusped high arches, each springing from slender tapering nook shafts. The parapet shows two rows of crenellations. As in the previous mosque here also the central dome is exceptionally big.

5. *Khulna & Jessore Districts*

Besides the Pre-Mughal monuments associated with the name of Khan Jahan (see chapter VIII), these two districts abound in ruins relating to Raja Pratapaditya of Jessore of the 16th century and of Raja Sitaram Roy of about A. D. 1700. The Mughal officers, who went to suppress them and who were stationed there, also built a few structures that survive till our own time. All these buildings show more or less influence from the local style of the Mughal architecture. The father of Pratapadiya, Raja Vikramaditya, founded the city of Jessore towards the last quarter of the 16th century A.D. After the defeat of Pratapaditya Mughal *faujdar* was located at Mirzanagar on the Kabadak. The ruins of Mirzanagar are thus described :—

Mirzanagar : "Here lie the remains of an old palace half a mile from Trimohani along the road which now connects that place with Kesabpur. The building is composed of two square courtyards separated by a high wall, and on the north of the northern

one and on the south of the southern one there are similar high walls. On the eastern side of both the squares is a double row of little arched dwellings, which seem rather to be built in the inside of a massive wall than to be constructed with reference to convenience of dwelling. These were apparently the retainers' houses, and the only entrance to the courtyards is through them.

"On the northern side of the northern square is a three-domed structure, which was the residence proper. The masonry is dilapidated, but the domed roof still remains. In front of this, and within the courtyard, is a large masonry reservoir which is said to have been a bath. The water was brought in by being pumped over the top of what has been termed the retainers' houses, and could be discharged by a subterranean channel. The source of the water was the river Bhadra, which though now closed, was, at the time when these buildings were occupied, a flowing river and flowed close beside them. The southern courtyard shows only a few Musulman tombs, and there are some tombs outside the building also. About a mile due south of this is what is called the Killabari or fort. It is a large area raised some eight or ten feet by earth excavated in all probability from a long and wide trench called the Motijhil, which bounds it on the south. This raised area was at one time, it is said, surrounded by a wall of which no traces now remain. Its length is east and west, and the principal entrance to it was upon the east. The entrance appears to have been fortified, for there used to be three cannons lying here, one of which is still lying in a field close by.

"Close outside the entrance is a low range of brick-built dark chambers, said to have been the prison house. Two of the chambers have small wells in them, and on the outside of the building there is a large and deep well.

Into these, it is said, malefactors were cast, and the inside was smoothly plastered over, so that there might be no chance of the victims climbing up[1]."

Ruins at Muhammadpur

The stories of Raja Sitaram Roy[2] attach themselves to the various parts of the ruins that are found in Muhammadpur. "There is at first the large quadrangle which encloses most of his buildings within which he kept his soldiers, and within which was his own house. It measures more than half a mile in each direction, and is surrounded on each side with an excavated ditch, the earth of which, thrown inwards is used to raise the level of the quadrangle, and especially of the edges of it, leaving as it were a ramp round it. The ditch on the eastern and northern sides has gradually filled in, principally through the influence of the river; but that on the western side is still full of water. On the southern side the ditch is of much more ample dimensions than on any other side; but it is much broader, and it extends westward far beyond the western side of the quadrangle. It forms a fine sheet of water, a mile long, looking almost like a river. By the earth obtained from these excavations, and by that obtained from tanks within its area, the level of almost the whole quadrangle has been considerably raised—a work which in itself represents an enormous amount of labour.

"It is to this quadrangle that the name of Muhammadpur is more properly applied, for Muhammadpur is not the name of any village or mouzah. Bagjanee is the name of the mouzah within which the chief buildings are, and the city which sprung up when Sitaram made

1. *List*. pp. 138—40
2. For detail see J. Westland, *A Report on the district of Jessore*, Calcutta, 1871, pp-32-49

this his capital spread over many others, as Naraynpur on the east, and Kanhaynagar and Shyamnagar on the west. The name Muhammadpur therefore extends over all thsese lands.

"The origin of the name is this. At the place where Sitaram desired to build his house, he found that an old Mahomedan faqir, named Muhammad Khan, had established himself. Him Sitaram desired to leave the place, but he declared that he would not, he would sooner be killed. However, on being pressed, he consented to go, provided his name were left as the name of the place and therefore Sitaram gave his new city the name of Muhammadpur.

"The chief entrance to within the quadrangle is, and probably was, at the south-east corner. Stationing ourselves here, we see, looking northward, the high and broad ramp upon which stood the bazar, and at the southern end of which, close to where we stand, is the more meagre bazar of the present day. Looking westward, we look along the river-like sheet of water which I have described as forming the southern side of the quadrangle; and looking southward, we see, just outside the boundary of the quadrangle, Sitaram's great tank, the Ram Sagar. Though now 170 years old, it is still the noblest reservoir of water in the district. Its area I would estimate by sight at 450 or 500 yards from north to south, and 150 to 200 yards from east to west; and it contains rarely less than 18 to 20 feet of water. It is the greatest single work that Sitaram has left behind him, the only one to which he himself attached his own name "Ram." At this place are seen the ruins of numerous temples, private buildings, offices and many other tanks."

Ruins at Ishwaripur: Far away in the interior of the Sundarbans in the Satkhira sub-division are found

some ruins associated with the name of Raja Pratapaditya or Raja Man Singh. The first is a collection of three tombs, the tradition about which is as follows :— Raja Pratapaditya having declared himself independent, was attacked by 12 generals sent by the emperor Jahangir, but all of them were defeated in battle. Later Man Singh defeated Pratapaditya and took him prisoner. He erected these three tombs in memory of the 12 Amirs. The second ruins appertain to a *Baradari*, said to have been erected by Pratapaditya. Next building is said to be a *habshikhana* or jail, but it was more probably a *hammamkhana* or bathing place of some Nawab with a well in the building for the supply of water. It resembles another *hammamkhana* (pl. XCVI No. 131) still standing at Jahazghata, some six miles from Ishwaripur. The last building is a three-domed *mosque at Tengah* (pl. XCI, No. 122) said to have been built by the same Raja[1]. It is in a very dilapidated condition.

6. Comilla

There is a mosque associated with the name of Shah Shuja at Comilla in Tippera district. In the *Rajamala*, the traditional history of the kings of the Tippera state, it is stated that Govinda Manikya, in memory of his friendhsip with Shah Shuja, erected this mosque on the bank of the river Gomati, and named it *Shuja mosque*. He also established a locality near about and called it *Shujaganj*[2]. The mosque has been much altered in recent times by the addition of a front verandah and other

1. *List* p.146
2. *Sri Rajamala*, printed by Isan Chandra Bhattacharya (Agartala, 1311 Tripura era), pp. 283-84 ; K. C Sinha, *Tripurar Itihasa* 1303 Tripura era) pp.93-94.

structures. The original mosque is an oblong structure, measuring 56′ long by 22′ wide externally, with octagonal corner towers. The three entrances on the main eastern facade have four-centred stilted arches, the central one is bigger than the others and is set in a slightly projected bay with bordering minarets, circular in section. The face is panelled, while on the top it is surmounted with battlemented cresting. On the roof there are three domes—the central one bigger than the others—which rest on octagonal ornamented drums and terminate in jar finial. Internally, the domes are carried on pendentives, and have again a basal course of merlons. The west wall has a semi-circular mihrab in the central bay and only wall mihrabs in the other two.

7. *Mymensing District*

There are some important monuments existing in the Kishoreganj sub-division of Mymensingh district which was originally a stronghold of the rebel Chief Isa Khan. He has also a mud fort built at Egarasindur on the eastern bank of the Brahmaputra, just where Bonar river breaks away towards the east[1]. The remains of the fort are no longer traceable, as the whole area is turned into a field. But two Mughal mosques still recall the antiquity of the place.

Mosques at Egarasindur :- The earliest building is known as *Sadi Mosque* Pl. LXXVIII, No. 107), and was constructed under the management of Sadi in 1062 A.H. (A.D.1652) during the reign of Shah Jahan[2]. This brick-built mosque is a single-domed square structure, 27′ each side, with corner towers projecting

1. *Bengal Distt. Gazetteers, Mymensingh* (Calcutta, 1917), P·32.
2. *Varendra Research Society's Monograph No. 8* (Rajshahi, 1950), P,35

above the parapets and terminating in a cap crowned with finial. The speciality of this mosque lies in maintaining the curved cornice below the horizontal parapets and terracotta decorations round the three main entrances on the east (pl. LXXIX, No. 108), and the ornamented mihrabs in the interior of the west wall. The creeper device round the main entrance, embossed designs at the spandrels and applied cusps at the outer faces, all speak of a revival of the terracotta art after the Mughals established peace in the province.

The other building is known as *Shah Muhammad's mosque* (pl. LXXVII, No. 106), probably after the name of the builder, but the inscriptional tablet is missing, and its exact date of construction is not known. However, on ground of style it may be dated to about A.D.1680. The mosque stands at the back of a raised platform, entered through a bungalow roofed oblong building (pl XCIV, No. 129) measuring 25′ long by 13′8″ wide. The courtyard in front of the mosque was originally paved with stone. The brick-built mosque is 32′ square with octagonal domed corner towers which have plastered kiosks terminating in a finial. On each of the three sides, except the west, the main arched entrance opens in a slightly projected bay with ornamental bordering minarets. That on the eastern face has cuspings applied to the outer face, and is flanked by arched doorways on either side. The facade is also decorated with panelled niches, some of which contain terracotta work, and on its top is the battlemented cresting. The parapet is horizontal. The dome, which is crowned with a beautiful lotus finial, is resting on an octagonal ornamented drum. The interior has also three decorated mihrabs on the west displaying the same terracotta art.

It seems that at Egarasindur over and above the

Mughal influence the local taste for terracotta art continued to appeal for the purpose of ornamentation.

Atiya Jami Masjid : At Atiya there is a *Jami Mosque* (pl. LXXX, No. 109) built in the dargah of Pir Ali Shahan shah Baba Kashmiri, who died in A.D.1507. The mosque was constructed in 1018 A.H. (A.D. 1609) by Sayyid Khan Pani, son of Bayazid Khan Pani. It is oblong in plan, measuring 69′ by 40′ with walls 7½′ thick, and consists of a single-domed square room with a verandah covered by three domes. At the four corners are huge octagonal towers, marked by several horizontal mouldings, and they are topped by plastered kiosks, which have, above the eves, a modernised finial. The eastern face has three arched entrances in the lower register, each entrance is separated from the other by numerous panellings. The upper register, except for the iscriptional tablet, is entirely divided into rectangular panels. They recall the style seen in the *Jhan Jhaniya Mosque* (pl.XXX, No. 49) and *Qadam Rasul* building (pl. XXXI, No. 50). Above, the cornice is deeply curved and the parapet is battlemented. The domes, which have tall finials, rest on battlemented drums and have an additional row of basal ornaments. The mosque illustrates a happy combination of the Mughal elements with the Pre-Mughal features.

Masjidpara Mosque : About four miles to the north-west of Egarasindur is a village with its name Masjid para, probably derived from the fact of an old mosque (Pl. XCV, No. 130) existing there. An inscription over the central doorway of the mosque informs that it was built in 1080 A. H. (A.D.1669) during the reign of Aurangzeb. This is a plastered brick-built mosque—a single-domed square structure, 29′ each side, with octagonal corner towers projecting above the

parapets and terminating in a ribbed cupola. The main facade on the east shows three arched entrances, the central one is bigger than the others and has a creeper device around with further moulded designs. There are also other four-centred arched panels, while the other faces show rectangular panels in plaster. On the top the horizontal parapets are decorated with merlons. The dome is slightly bulbous, and has a row of ornamental cresting at the bulge and over the top a lotus finial. The interior of the west wall has three miharbs, the central one is again embellished with a frame of creeper device, rosettes at the spandrels, and other mouldings. The mosque illustrates a happy blending of the Mughal plaster design with the local terracotta work.

Gurai Mosque. At about sixteen miles due east of Egarasindur is another village, called Gurai where we find a beautiful Mughal mosque (pl. LXXXI, No. 110) built in the same style as the *Masjidpara mosque*. It is also a single-domed square structure with octagonal corner towers. Out of the three entrances in the main facade the central one is larger and slightly projected with faceted pillars bordering the projection. Its outer cusped arch also springs from decorated pillars and has prominent rosettes at the spandrels. On its either side are panels depicting terracotta designs. The whole of the remaining face is panelled. On the top is a double cornice band crowned with battlemented cresting with additional pinnacles, two on each side. The dome, which rests on an octagonal drum, is ornamented with basal merlons and crowned by a lotus finial. The interior has also three decorated mihrabs on the west. On ground of style it may be dated to about A.D.1680.

8. *Octagonal Building At Nauda In Rajshahi District*

About sixteen miles due south-east of Gaur are to be seen the ruins of an ancient city, extending from the junction of the rivers Mahananda and Purnabhava and lying on the southern bank of the latter river. The remains comprise at present three villages, Rohanpur, Prasadpur and the hamlet of Nauda. In the outskirts of the Rohanpur village stands a Mughal building, a single domed octagonal structure (Pl. XCIII, No. 128) with four entrances, having stilted four-centred arches, on the four sides. The entrance facades are panelled, showing a variety of arches, and each is flanked on either side by slender ornamental minarets. On the top it is surmounted with battlemented cresting, above which rises the dome, now enveloped in jungle growth. Local traditions aver that it was a tomb, but at present there is no grave in the interior. On ground of style the building may be dated to the end of the 17th century A.D.

9. *Farrukh Siyar's Mosque At Mahasthan In Bogra District*

The ruins of Mahasthan appertain to the oldest town, with its ancient name Pundranagar, in Bengal. Lying on the eastern bank of the river Karatoya, the remains are really known as *Mahasthangarh*, because they comprise a fortifed enclosure besides other mounds. Within this fortification on the top of the highest mound stands the *dargah* of Shah Sultan Mahisawar, a pioneer Muslim saint of this region, whose history is still wrapped up in mysterious traditions. At the *Dargah* lies a small Mughal mosque (pl. LXXIII No. 113), a single-domed square structure with octagonal towers at the four corners. The main facade has three entrances, the central one is larger and is set in a slightly projected bay with bordering

ornamental minarets. Similar minarets also flank the projection of the central mihrab at the back of the west wall. On the top is the battlemented cresting, above which rises a bulbous dome, terminating in a gilded finial. The exterior as well as the interior face of the wall is panelled. An inscription set up over the central doorway records that the mosque was completed in 1130 A. H. (A.D. 1718), in the 7th year of the reign of Shah Farrukh (Siyar)[1].

10. *Gaur*

The last phase of the building activity at Gaur falls during the viceroyalty of Shah Shuja who appeared to have stayed for some time at this place before finally settling at Rajmahal. Munshi Ilahi Bakhsh, the author of *Kkurshid-i-Jahan Numa*, states that Shah Shuja honoured very much the saint Shah Niamatullah Wali, who lies buried at Gaur. It is probably at his instance that the saint's tomb and the adjoining mosque were built. The saint died, according to one account, in 1075 A.H. (A.D. 1664) and, according to another, 1018 A. H. (A.D. 1669)[2]. The *dargah* complex of the saint Shah Niamatullah Wali lies at the village of Firozpur outside the fortification of Gaur.

Tomb of Shah Niamatullah :- The tomb (pl.LVIII, No. 84) stands on a raised platform, and consists of a central tomb chamber, 21½ feet square, with verandah on four sides, the exterior being a square of 49′ (Fig. 30). At the outer corners are octagonal towers, that extend beyond the parapet, terminating in a ribbed cupola with a tall finial as the crown. The

1. P. C. Sen, "Mahasthan and its environs", in *Varendra Research Society Monograph No. 2*. p. 31.
2. Abid Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 83.

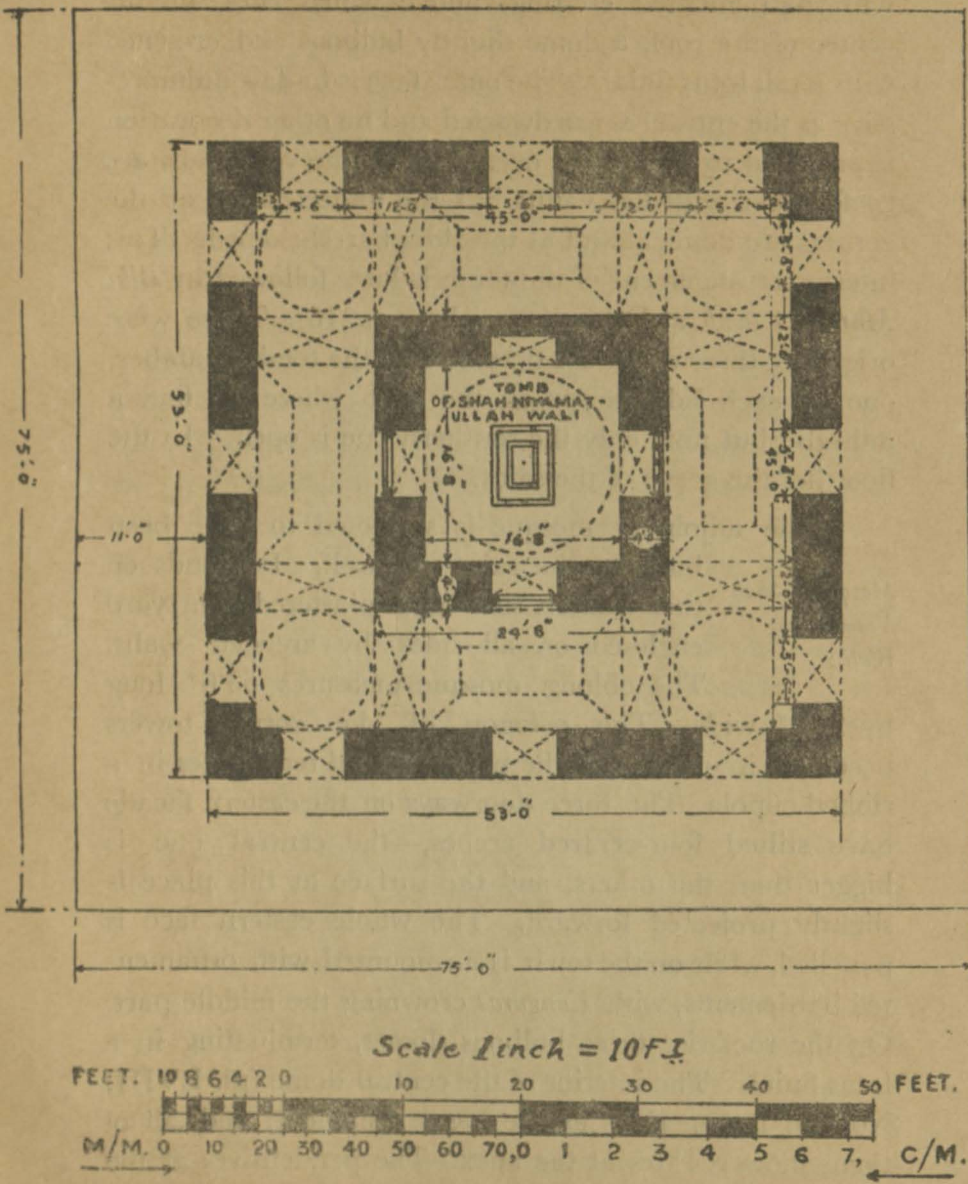


Fig. 30

facade shows three arched entrances—the arches being stilted and four-centred, but the panelling of the wall has now disappeared. The cornice of the wall is faced

33—

with battlemented cresting, above which rises, in the centre of the roof, a dome slightly bulbous and crowned with a tall lotus finial. The outer face is to-day unimpressive as the entrances are dwarfed and no other decoration is provided to relieve the eye. Inside, the verandahs are roofed over with flat vaults but the under-ceiling at the corners are domical and at the sides barrel-shaped. This interior arrangement of the tomb is later followed in *Bibi Mariam's tomb* at Dacca (see above p.216). There were originally three doorways that led into the tomb chamber, one on each side except on the west where we find a mihrab ; but now only the southern one is open. In the floor lies the grave of the saint.

Mosque of Shah Niamatullah Wali :-

The adjoining mosque is supposed to have been built by the saint[1] himself. It stands on the western side of a plastered courtyard enclosed on all sides by arcaded walls. The oblong mosque measures 63′6″ long by 24′9″ wide. The octagon of the corner towers becomes circular above the parapets and terminates in a ribbed cupola. The three doorways on the eastern facade have stilted four-centred arches,—the central one is bigger than the others, and the surface at this place is slightly projected forward. The whole eastern face is panelled, while on the top it is surmounted with ornamented battlements, with *Kanguras* crowning the middle part. On the roof rise three bulbous domes, terminating in a lotus finial. The interior of the central dome (pl. LVIII, No. 85) has merlons as the basal ornament, and all of them show rosettes at the apex. The pendentives at the angles are hidden behind the plastered net-work. The west wall has three mihrabs—the central one is projected behind.

1. *Ibid*, P. 84

Shah Shuja's Gate :

The third building, which is associated with the name of Shah Shuja is the *Eastern Gate* (pl. LIX, No. 86) of the citadel of Gaur. Abid Ali[1] writes, "The Gate is said to have been built by Shah Shuja in about A.D. 1655 when, long after the desertion of the city of Gaur, he endeavoured to revive it." The style of its architecture confirms this tradition. It is a three-storeyed structure with a broad facade, measuring 65′. In the middle a high stilted four-centred arch, with a half dome, is carried upto the top of the second storey, below which opens the archway. The high arch is cusped, while the sides are panelled showing multi-cusped arches. Flanking the central archway on either side are the door-openings in the first and second storeys, which are demarcated by projected cornice bands. The third storey has a row of arched panels on either side of the window openings in the middle and the top is surmounted by the *Kanguras*. In front of this gate on either side of the road are guard rooms, and above them was a *Naqqar Khana* (place for beating drums).

11. Rajmahal

Rajmahal first came into prominence in the time of Akbar, when Raja Man Singh, the Mughal Subahdar of Bengal, made this place as his head-quarter. The older name of the place was Akmahal, but now it was renamed Akbaranagar. Man Singh is credited with the erection of a palace and a mosque. His palace was situated in a locality called *Hadaf*,[2] and Buchanan notes that it was partly built of stone. But the most important

1. *Ibid*, p. 64
2. See appendix p. 5 and Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. II., p. 69

period in the life of the city was between 1639-60, when Shah Shuja transferred the seat of his residence from Dacca to this place. Shuja endowed the city with beautiful buildings, but they are all now in ruins.

At Teliagarhi, where the hills descend close to the river, and from the boundary between the Mughal provinces of Bengal and Behar, Shah Shuja built a fortess, which was a considerable work, the two extreme gates being about a mile apart. The gates are built partly of stone, the houses within are entirely of brick[1].

A complete description of the buildings erected by Shah Shuja is given by Munshi Shyam Prasad. We read of the construction of the residence of *Daulat Khana* of Shah Shuja, the *Sang-i-Dalan*, the *Machhi Bhavan*, *Anand Sarowar Lake*, the *Haveli*, the *Hammam*, the *Hauz*,

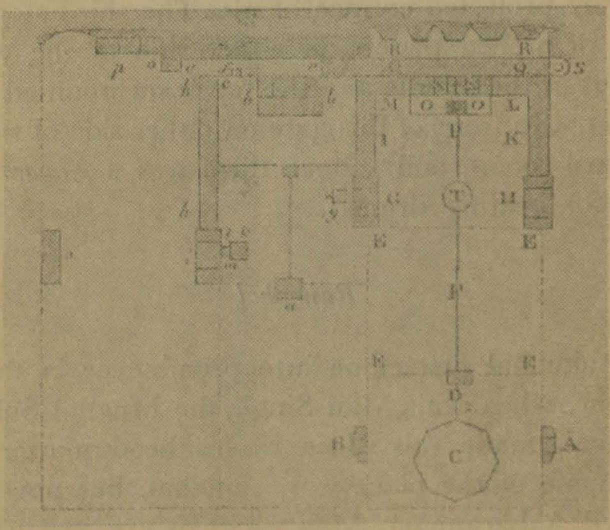


Fig. 31

the fountains, the *Jalu Khana*, the *Diwani-i-Khas* and the *Diwan-i-Am*.

1. Martin, *Op. cit.* pp. 66-67

Of these monuments the detailed description of the *Sang-i-Dalan* (Fig.31) is given here in the words of Buchanan (later Martin). "Near the ruinous inn, which I am assured occupies part of the situation of the palace, may be observed two gateways (A B) which, as usual in Muhammedan buildings are very large and hand-some. Entering by the eastern one (A) the visitor probably came into a court, in the centre of which was an octagon reservoir for water (C) each side 32 feet in length, and constructed of brick. The water was conveyed to it by a narrow canal of the same materials (F) which seems to have been formed in the middle of an elevated walk, that led by the right of the court to the interior of the palace. On this road, at no great distance from the reservior has been a smaller gateway (D) leading into another court (E E E E) which was nearly square and extended to the wings of the principal court of the Palace. This court is intersected from north to south by the road, and no remains of buildings can be traced, although some probably existed.

The great court of the palace was surrounded on three sides by buildings of brick, two stories high, which consisted of a great central building (N N), with two great wings (G H), connected by four lower ranges (M L I K). The central building had before it a terrace (O O), in the middle of which was a square reservior (P), from whence the water fell into the canal, and was conveyed into another octagon reservoir near the entrance of this court, from whence again it passed through the canal into the reservoir (C) in the outermost court. This great central building, evidently the most ornamented part of the whole was in the upper story divided into three apartments, a large one in the centre, and a smaller at each end; but the three rooms communicated by very wide and lofty arches. The lower story of this must have

been very dismal. Under each end room it is divided into two by a longitudinal wall; under the centre it is first divided into four by transverse walls, and then the two middle divisions are each subdivided into two. The interior decorations of this building can no longer be traced, but the plaster on the outside has contained wreathed mouldings in a good taste. Each of the two great wings on the upper floor, has been divided into three chambers as in the centre, only smaller. The lower buildings (I K L M) by which the three great ones are connected, have been subdivided into a vast number of apartments, that, owing to rubbish, dirt, and disgusting and dangerous reptiles, it would be difficult to trace. Between the farther building of this great court and the river has been a row of apartments, or at least arched passages (Q Q), communicating one side with the lower story of these buildings, and on the other with a terrace (R R) over-hanging the Ganges, which is called the Tukht. The greater part of this has been undermined, and has fallen into the river in immense masses, so that the form in the plan is laid down, from what I judge it may have been from some fragments that remain entire, but are not sufficient to enable a plan to be traced with accuracy. At the east end of the row of buildings (Q Q), is a great well lined with brick, through which the river water was raised by machinery to supply the palace, and the jet d'eaux, that were undoubtedly in the reservoirs, of at least the great court; and into which the natives imagine that the ladies of Sultan Shuja threw themselves with all their ornaments, when he fled before the victorious troops of his brother. The great court of the palace is considered by the natives as having been the ladies apartment; but I am convinced that it is a mistake, as I shall afterwards have occasion to show. I see nothing about these buildings marking that cautious jealousy, with

which the Muhammedans watch this precious commodity. I am persuaded, that the great court is the place where the public entertainments were given, and all round the cornices of the buildings are fixed rings of stone, to which the sides of a canopy could be fixed, so as to shade the whole court.

Returning to the reservoir where we first began, and passing the gate (B), the visitor comes into another court, where most of the buildings have been destroyed, having probably been small places or huts, for the accommodation of troops, but turning to the right, you come to a gateway of considerable size (a), which is called Mojragah. Immediately within this is nother great court, having in front of the gate an elevated terrace (c, c, c, c,) on which is erected the Dewan khanah, where the sultan and his officers sat to administer justice, transact business, and give audience. Those who were admitted to this honour, began their prostrations at the Mojragah, and continued frequently to repeat them as they advanced to approach as near the royal person as the etiqette permitted. The Dewan khanah (b b) is the part of the building that is in a state most fit to give an idea of the whole, the walls being entire. It is true, that the cornice has been injured by a new roof added by Mr. Dickson, who convered the building, then very ruinous, and has preserved it as a treasure, for which it still serves, although it has again become ruinous. It consists of an open gallery extending the whole length of the front, and behind this of three apartments which are very dark. This building is only of one story, and next to the central part of the first great court has, no doubt, been the highest finished part of the whole. The view of its front will probably induce the reader to conclude with me, that whatever may have been the magnificence of the palace,

its elegance was on a very confined scale; and this will be further confirmed by the drawing (Fig 32), which

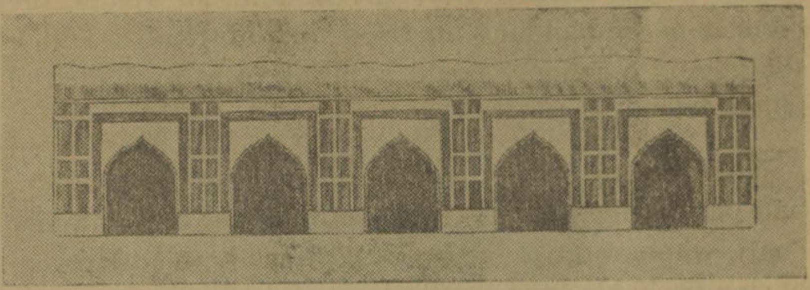


Fig. 32

represents the finishing of one side of the room (d), at the east end of the Dewan khanah, where the original plaster remains perfectly entire. The east side of the court of the Dewan khanah is shut in by the buildings (G I), which form the west side of the grand court; and the covered gallery (QQ) extends so far along its back, as to form a communication with the back of the Dewan khanah, and with a low terrace (e e) between that and the river, to which at its east end there is a descent by a small stair(f). On the right, entering the court of the Dewan khanah, is a small square terrace (g) on which, it is said, the officer called Dewan sat, while the Sultan gave audience, but it does not seem suited for such a purpose, as it appears to have had no shelter.

The east side of the court of the Dewan khanah conists of a low range of buildings (h h), which communicates with one consisting of two stories (i), the upper as usual, divided into three apartments. This has no windows towards the court of the Dewan khanah, but behind it is a small room (k), which has a door towards that court, and communicates by a passage (1) with the interior of the building. On the outside of this passage, facing towards the gate and guard-room(a), called Mojragah,

are niches apparently intended for the accommodation of a guard. This passage seems to me to be that by which the prince passed into his ladies apartments; and these, I presume, composed a third court, bounded on the east by the buildings (h, h, i,) of the court of the Dewan khanah, and on the west by a similar row, of which the greater part has been removed, to make room for a bungalo built by an European; but the building(n), which formed its end most remote from the river still remains, and is exactly similar to the one (i) opposite to it. If this was really the adode of the ladies, large walls no doubt surrounded it; but of these no traces remain. Towards the river this interior court had some small buildings, two of which are still pretty entire, but so much transformed and concealed by the additions of some Goth, their original form can be scarcely traced. The one most highly finished is a small oratory (o), 18 feet by 12 on the inside. Its front consists of white marble tolerably polished, and neatly inlaid with pious sentences in black marble. The minars or columns at the corners have been built into the walls of a room, where the Goth probably swilled cool claret, and which from its neatness would have deserved some credit, had it not totally destroyed the face of the building against which it was erected; for these minars are the most ornamental parts of Moslem temples. The interior of the oratory has been totally preserved, but has always been clumsy, the marble extending only a little way up the walls. The only injury that the interior of this chamber has suffered, is that in repairing the roof, the Goth has removed the ceiling, and left the beams staring in all the bareness of Anglo-Indian architecture. The other parts of the outside he has also completely changed, by adding a bath to one end of the oratory, and by white-washing the whole; but the rain has begun to remedy this, and shows that the outside has been painted,

and enamelled with very gaudy colours. East from this oratory, and overhanging the river, is a small building, where the prince and his ladies are said to have sat while enjoying the fresh air that blows from the water. This originally consisted of three long narrow apartments, which the Goth to increase accommodation, has divided into five. That in the centre was open at the sides, where the roof was supported by little clumsy pillars and arches of black marble; but it has a pleasant situation, and the ceiling has been very neat. The two end apartments were very long with small windows, through which alone the ladies were probably allowed to peep. These have been cut down to the floor and enlarged, so as to admit a ventilation necessary in such a climate for European existence, and the whole has been surrounded by an open gallery, which added much to the comfort of the accommodations, but was not much suited to the taste of the orginal building, which in fact should have been left undisturbed; and the gentleman might have been much better accommodated, and on more reasonable terms, by a building entirely new.

"Although the palace derives its name from stone, no great quantity of that material seems to have entered its composition. The doors, windows, and a row next the foundation of the chief part, seem to have been the whole, and the removal of these by cutting them out of the wall, seems to have been what has principally reduced a very strong and massy building to such a wretched state of decay[1]."

Jami Masjid :- The mosque stands at Hadaf about four miles from the town of Rajmahal. This is a very beautiful building, built in 1592 by Raja Man Singh. Tradition has that it was originally

1. Martin, *Op. cit.* pp. 70-76

intended for a temple, but was afterwards turned into the *Jami Masjid* for fear of the emperor. The plan and the elevation (Fig. 33), as given by Buchanan

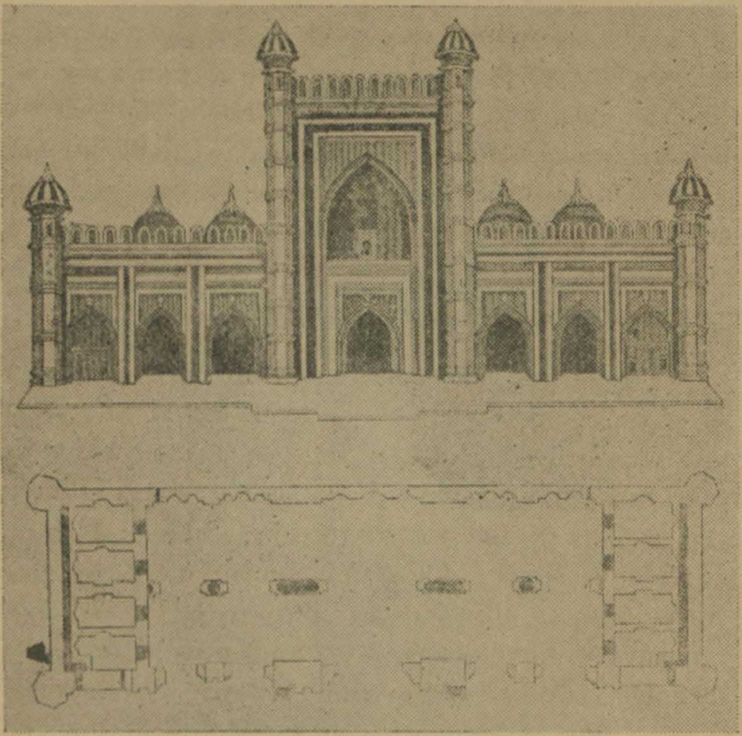


Fig. 33

do not support the tradition. The design fully bears out the concept of a mosque. It measures, exclusive of the small chambers at the end, 188′ by 60′. The mosque is unique of its kind in Bengal, as in its outer appearance it tries to copy the design of the Jami Mosque at Fathpur Sikri. The tall fronton in the middle of the eastern facade and the screen of arches with battlemented parapets all recall the Mughal Proto-type. But the Bengali version is emphasized in the octagonal corner towers and the multi-domes that cover the roof.

Rajmahal Mosque:

There is another mosque lying by the road from the Bazar to the *Jami Masjid*. Its complete description, which is available, is quoted here :— "The masjid may be roughly described as an oblong building, about 220 feet long by 65 feet wide, completely filling the west end of a court 220 feet wide and about 500 feet long, which was once arcaded or provided with niches along its entire inner face. A gateway at the east end---once noble, now in picturesque ruin---gives access to the court, which is overgrown with thorny scrub, and interspersed with tombs and pitfalls.

"The facade once consisted of five archways in the pointed Saracenic style, of 17 to 18 feet clear span, the central one being larger than the rest, and provided with a projecting demi-portico with octagonal towers at the two corners. The portico was pierced by a noble archway 23 feet wide in space. Over the central archway ran a corridor with small windows terminated at either end by massive square towers, continuations upwards of the abutments of the great arch below. Corresponding features, but without the archway, form the back facade. A battlement cornice of the curved pattern which is so unmistakeable a feature, not only of the grand monumental architecture of Bengal proper, but of every hut in that province, ran at a height of about 30 feet above the ground along the front and rear facades. It was broken at the great central arch in front and its corresponding projection at the back by the square massive tower and windowed corridor already mentioned as surmounting the central great archway. Four octagonal towers rise at the four extreme corners of the masjid, terminated by short flat-domed tops and spires, and the domes between these on either side at the front and back

and the projecting high central piece complete the facade. In the interior it is divided into a great central nave, 50 feet long by 30 feet wide, and two aisles on either side. On the outer sides of the aisles run a series of four small two-storied chambers intended probably for the female congregation, or possibly as residences or oratories for the officiating priests. In the thickness of the wall on the outer sides of these two-storied chambers, which form the outer north and south walls of the masjid, were stairs leading up to the upper row of chambers and on to the roof.

"The main nave is roofed by a noble vault running from end to end, and screened from the front and back facades by the towers and windowed corridors mentioned before. This vault rises from a higher level than the rest of the roof of the building, and being of the usual pointed style, rises to a great height (40 feet above the floor) above the domes which roof the aisles, and is special feature in the construction. The lofty towers and windowed corridors which serve as a screen to it in front and back form commanding features of the exterior style of architecture, and, in the absence of any inscriptions, its date may, with fair certainty, be fixed at the first-half of the 14th century A.D

"The aisles are cut up, for convenience of roofing, into squares by cross shaped pillars, and covered by domes of about 21 feet diameter. They spring at a lower level than the great vault. Lastly, the four-storied chamber at either end are covered by four corresponding small domes at each end, also rising at a somewhat higher level than the domes of the aisles.

"It will thus be seen that the lines of the facade are not only broken up with considerable artistic skill in plan, but also, and even more boldly, in elevation—a feature

which soon ceased to characterise Muhammadan buildings as their power and the corresponding art talent in their kingdom decayed."[1]

Bidge at Hadaf: This is situated a few hundred yards to the north of the *Jami Masjid*, on the old road to Sakri (Sahebganj). It is said to be contemporaneous with the *Jami Masjid.* It consists of six spans of 10 feet each, five piers with cut waters at both the wings, and four round bastions, one at each corner, with top for prayer.[2]

Tomb of Bakht Homa: It is described thus : – "This tomb is certainly the building of best taste in the place. Bakht Homa was the widow of Shaista Khan who is said to have been an aide-de-camp to Aurangzeb. A square space containing, perhaps, 3 acres has been surrounded by a neat brick wall, consisting of a series of arches filled up by a small thickness of wall which produces a pleasing effect and saves materials. At each corner is a neat octagonal building, the lower storey as high as the wall, the upper covered with a dome and having in each side a wide arched window. In the middle of one side is the entrance by a lofty, wide, and handsome, gate, which is arched and ornamented with a dome and minarets. This area is planted, and in the centre is the tomb, which is square with an open gallery of three arches on each side and a small chamber at each corner. The building is adorned at the corners by four minarets, too low, as usual here, but in other respects neat. The tomb in the centre is covered by a dome of brick, and each of the corner apartments is covered by a wooden cupola with eight windows. The cupola, the upper parts of the minarets,

1. *List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, Calcutta,* 1896, pp. 456-60
2. *Ibid.* p. 460

and the whole cornice are painted with very bright colours. On the cornice especially is a row of fine blue Iris, very gaudy, but exceedingly stiff[1]."

12. Burdwan

Burdwan[2] is famous for the dargah of Pir Bahram Saqqa, who was a Chaghtai Turk of Bokhara and came to India during the reign of Humayun. Haji Bahram, who had made pilgrimages to Makka, Madina and Najaf, enjoyed the good graces of Akbar. When he was accused of being a *Rafzi*, he left Agra in disgust, and died at Burdwan in A. H. 970 (A.D. 1562-63). The tomb (pl LXXXV, No.116) was built soon after, and the empe ror made some endowments for its maintenance. There are several buildings inside the dargah complex. The tomb occupies the prominent place, and consists of a single-domed square building. The battlement of the walls is curved, as was in vogue in the Pre-Mughal period, but the walls are plastered in the Mughal style. Abdul Wali mentions the existence of original brick-carvings hidden behind the plaster and white wash. The entrance into the tomb is provided in the south side.

In the compound of the dargah stand the graves of Shir Afgan and Qutbuddin Khan. According to *Masirul Umara* the dead body of Qutbuddin was transferred later to Fathpur Sikri.

The tomb of Khwaja Anwar Shahid is situated in a quarter of Burdwan, now called "Ber (or enclousre) of Khwaja Anwar." There are two large gates leading to the garden, in one extremity of which the nobleman and

1. *Ibid.* p. 462
2. For detailed history see Maulvi Abdul Wali, 'The antiquities of Burdwan', in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1917, pp. 177-89.

his fellow-martyrs are buried, over whose graves a superb mausoleum was built. Between the gates and the mausoleum there is a tank, on one side of which is a mosque, and on the other a madrasa. In the middle of the tank is a little pavilion, surrounded by narrow verandahs which is connected with a bridge on the side of the the mosque leading to the pavilion. The incident of the tragic death of Khwaja Anwar took place in 1109 A.H.(A.D.1698) in Burdwan during the viceroyalty of Sultan Azimush-shan, grandson of Aurangzeb. The viceroy Azimush-shan built a Jami Mosque in 1111 A.H. (A.D.1699). This mosque is also of the three-domed type but has prominent towers at the four corners, each crowned by a low dome.

13. *Murshidabad*

Murshidabad was anciently called Makhsusabad or Maqsudabad, and according to some, it was founded by Akbar. H. Beveridge accepts this tradition on the plea that a place to the east of the city is still known as Akbarpur. The name Murshidabad was given by Murshid Quli Khan, *alias* Ja'far Khan, *alias* Kar Talab Khan, when he removed the seat of the Provincial government in 1703 from Dacca to this place. According to the translator of the *Sair-i-Mutakharin*[1] Kolaria is the original name of the city, which survives in the name of a locality at the east of the city. The once famous city of Murshidabad lies on the left bank of the Bhagirathi, about nine miles north of Berhampur. No portion of the old city, called Mahinagar, on the right bank, is now left, except the *Khushbagh* and *Roshnibagh* cemeteries; a few ruins there are, but mostly covered with jungle[2].

1. Vol. I., p. 254 note.
2. For details see H. Beveridge, 'Old Places in Murshidabad,

The most conspicuous building in Murshidabad is the palace of the Nawab Bahadur, which stands on the bank of the Bhagirathi. It is an imposing pile, in the Italian style of architecture, and was designed and built under the supervision of General Duncan McLeod of the Bengal Corps of Engineers; the foundation stone was laid in 1829, and the building was completed in 1837. It is a three-storied building surmounted by a dome. The palace itself is called the *Bara Kothi* or *Hazarduari*, i.e. the house with a thousand doors, and the enclosure within which it is situated is known as the *Nizamat Qila*. This contains, in addition to the palace, the *Imambara*, the *Medina*, a clock tower, three mosques and residential and other quarters[1].

Imambara : Major Walsh gives a detailed description of this building, which is quoted here in extenso :

"The old Imambara was erected by Nawab Suraj-u-Dowlah. It was on the north of the present main palace. To build the Imambara only Mahomedan architects and workmen were employed; Hindus were excluded from taking part in the work. On the first day of the erection, Suraj-u-Dowlah brought bricks and mortar with his hands, and laid the foundation of the building himself. In the middle of the Imambara, the 'Medina" was situated. The plot of land on which this "Medina" was built had been dug out to the depth of six feet, and had been refilled with the sacred earth i.e. earth from Mecca. In the east, the hall or chamber facing west has been fixed as the place for *Majlis*.

Calcutta. Review, vol. XCIV, 1892, pp. 337-45 ; and Major J. H. T. Walsh, *A History of Murshidabad district*, London, 1902.

1. L. S. S. O. 'Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers*. Murshidabad, pp. 209-10.

"On the west, in the chambers facing east, were placed various representations of the tombs of the *Imans*, made of gold, silver, glass, and wood, and hundreds of "alums" (sacred flags or standards). During the Mohurram, it is in this part of the building that verses of the Koran are read day and night, without the least interval; at other times the reading is only at fixed periods.

"The chambers on the north and south were set apart as storehouse and workshops, where hundreds of men were employed for the management of the lights during the Mohurram. The rooms of the second storey were surrounded with screens of mica, on which were painted various designs of flowers, beasts, and men, etc, with thousands of cressets behind them. When these cressets were lighted at night, they presented a very imposing display. Various kinds of cut-glass chandeliers, wall lamps, and girandoles, adorned these various chambers and during the Mohurram, the building was magnificently illuminated. In the north and south chambers there were images, two in each, of *Borac* representing him as having the face of man and body of peacock. The tails of these *Boracs* were made so high as almost to reach the ceiling. Instead of adorning the tails with feathers, they were bedecked with beautifully painted shields, China and silver saucers, and hundreds of polished swords and daggers. Hundreds of candles were lighted near these shields at night, to make them more conspicuous. In the north and south of the enclosure were two courtyards where, during the Mohurram, shopkeepers kept their stalls.

"In the year 1842 A.D., this Imambara caught fire and was partly burnt down, and again on 23rd December, 1846 A.D. at midnight it caught fire from the fireworks let off on the occasion of a party given to the Europeans,

and was completely burnt down, with all in it. Not a single thing was saved except the "Medina".

"The present Imambara was built in 1848, under the management of Syud Sadik Ali Khan, the then Diwan Nizamat[1]. Its site is slightly to the north of the old building. The old "Medina" which had been saved from the fire, was left in its place; and a new one was erected in the new Imambara. The new Imambara is a large rectangular building, with a central enclosure, and is furnished in the same way as the old one. There are two additional courtyards, one on the west and another on the east. To the west, on the bank of the river, there was a Hindu temple. This was razed to the ground, and another was built in place of it at Ichaganj. On the site of this temple, on the bank of the river, a two-storied Musjid was erected. This Musjid commands a very beautiful view. H. H. the Nawab Nazim Munsur Ali sometimes performed his Id Namaz in this Musjid."

Katra Masjid : The ruins of *Katra Masjid* stand two miles to the east of Murshidabad Railway Station. It was built by Murshid Quli Khan in A.H.1137 (A.D.1723). The name is derived from the fact that towards the close of his life he determined to make a *Katra* or market, and to place in its centre a mosque and his own tomb. He chose for this purpose the eastern side of the city, and is said to have pulled down a number of Hindu temples in order to get materials. Apparently the design was not completed. The spot is still called Jafar Khan's Katra, and a small bazar is held here twice a week, but it seems never to have become a centre of trade, and is now more or less a jungle. The mosque stands on a high platform in the centre of a

1. During the time the present Imambara was being erected the Mohurram ceremonies were held in the Murshidabad High School.

huge square courtyard, measuring 166′ each side, which latter is surrounded by a double-storied row of rooms. Four immense *minars*, resembling Egyptian pylons in solidity, were built at the four conrners of the quadrangle (Pl. LXXXVI, No.117). Two of the *minars* one in the north-west and the other in the south-west, are still standing. The *minars* are octagonal and taper upwards. Inside there is a winding stair case that leads to the top. The *Katra* is approached from the eastern side, where the door-step is reached by a flight of fourteen steps. Below the entrance is an under-cell, where lies buried Murshid Quli Khan. The mosque proper is rectangular in plan, measuring about 130′ by 24′ with octagonal corner minarets (pl. LXXXVII No.118). The mosque is a copy of the *Kar Talab Khan's Mosque* built in Dacca. The eastern facade is richly panelled (pl. LXXXVIII No 119) and shows fine entrances. Each of the doorways opens under a high multi-cusped arch, the central doorway being flanked by slender turrets. The parapet is battlemented, and the roof is covered with five domes having tall finials. The interior makes a single hall with transverse arches springing from the side walls. Such arches are common in the Mughal buildings of Bengal, and they need not be derived from the Deccan, as has been done by R.D. Banerji[1]. The mosque is in a very bad state of preservation.

Moti Jhil :

One and a half mile south-east of the palace of the Nawab Bahadur is *Motijhil*, meaning the pearl lake. It is a long horse-shoe-shaped lake, the origin of which has been disputed. Rennell says that it is one of the windings of a former channel of the Cassimbazar river[2], i.e. the Bhagirathi. A

1. *An Rep. Arch. Survey of India*, 1924-25, pp. 92-93; Sri Nikhilnath Roy, *Murshidabad Kahini*, pp. 34-39.
2. Rennell, *Memoir of a Map of Hindustan*, p. 345.

palace, called the *Sang-i-dalan*, a mosque and other buildings were built here in 1743 by Nawazish Khan, *alias* Shahmat Jang, nephew and son in-law of Alivardi Khan[1].

Khushbagh : About three miles to the west of *Motijhil*, on the western bank of the Bhagirathi is the cemetery of Ali Vardi Khan, which bears the name of Khushbagh or garden of happiness. The cemetery consists of three walled enclosures. The outer of these is entered by a gateway (pl.LXXXIX, No.120) from the east side, in front of which are the ruins of an old *ghat*. The wall facing the river is loop-holed for musketry, and flanked by octagonal bastions. The grounds inside are laid out as gardens, with hedges bordering the walls. In the outer enclosure there are eighteen tombs, only two of which have any inscription. The middle of the three enclosures is the principal cemetery, and contains the remains of Ali Vardi Khan and of his grandson Sirajuddowla[2].

Jafarganj : The tombs of the later Nawabs from Mir Jafar to Humayun Jah, and also of Mani Begam (wife of Mir Jafar) and other Begams, are in the Nizamat cemetery at Jafarganj, a mile to the north of the Nawab Bahadur's palace. Almost opposite this cemetery is the *Deori*, which was the palace of Mir Jafar before his elevation to the masnad[3].

Mansurganj : On the side of the Bhagirathi, opposite Jafarganj, were the pleasure grounds of *Hirajhil* (meaning diamond lake) and the palace of Mansurganj, which Sirajuddowla erected with materials brought from the ruins of Gaur. It

1. L. S. S. O. 'Malley, *Op. cit.*, p. 215.
2. Ibid, P.219.
3. Ibid. P.221

was from Mansurganj that Sirajuddowla set out for Plassey, and here he returned after the battle, before flying to Bhagwangola and thence up the Ganges. Here, too, Clive installed Mir Jafar on the *masnad*. With the exception of a few broken walls and foundations, the Bhagirathi has swept the whole palace away, and the Hirajhil is no longer a lake[1].

Conclusion : Murshidabad was the last Mughal Provincial capital in Bengal. The buildings in and around Murshidabad started from the Pre-Mughal period[2]. In the 17th century the place became an important centre of silk trade, but the fortune of the city rose to the highest pitch in the 18th century when Murshid Quli Khan transferred the seat of government from Dacca to this place. Thenceforward the city was embellished with numerous buildings and pleasure gardens, but all in a decadent style of the Mughal architecture. The pleasure resorts were all temporary, and hardly anything permanent could be completed in the brief span of the life of the city. Finally it bode a doom of the Mughal architecture as well as of the great empire that the Muslims built in this sub-continent, as is beautifuly expressed in the following couplet :—

দিল্লী মুর্শিদাবাদ হইবে এখন,
মুসলমান গৌরবের সমাধিভবন।

Dilli Murshidabad hoibe ekhan,
Musalman Gauraver Samadhi bhavan.

Delhi and Murshidabad now
Will entomb the glory of the Muslims.

1. Ibid. PP.221-22.
2. e.g. Kharaul Mosque see *Annual Report of Archaeological Survey of India*. 192324 PP. 32-33 & pl. XIII, a

APPENDIX

AHWAL GAUR WA PANDUAH

OF

Munshi Shyam Prasad

ed. by

Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani

Printed
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INTRODUCTION.

The following edition of the text is based on one manuscript, bearing the number 2841, preserved in the India Office Library. The manuscript bears the title:

الجز اول خلاصه احوال سلاطین و مکانات
قلعه گوڑه لکهنوتی و قصبه پنڈوه

A note added to the manuscript says that it is "an account of the fortress of Gorh or Lakhnowti, written by Munshī Shiām Parshād at the request of Major William Francklin; and also containing a notice of Pandooah."

In the year 1902 H. Beveridge noticed this manuscript in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LXXI, pt. I, p. 44 and remarked, "It (Ms.) is an account of the buildings and inscriptions at Rajmahal, Gaur and Panduah, and it also has a chapter containing a list of the rulers of Bengal from the days of Lakṣmaṇa Sena. It is the result of local investigations made by Shyām Prasâd in November and December, 1810, when he visited Gaur etc., in attendance on Major Francklin. The report was drawn up for Major Francklin and appears to be the source of the information given in Francklin's Journal [1] of which good use has been made by Mrs. Ravenshaw and Mr. Grote in Ravenshaw's Gaur. Most, if not all, the inscriptions quoted in the notes to that work are to be found in Shyām Prasād's report. The latter does not contain much that is new about Gaur or Panduah, but as it is a very small work—only thirty two pages of Persian, and is our earliest topography of Gaur, I beg to suggest that it should be published in our Society's Journal."

This suggestion of Beveridge was never acted upon. Now that a comprehensive book on Muslim architecture in Bengal, is being published, I thought it worthwhile to publish the text, as it is the earliest topographical description of the monuments of

1 This Journal was published by the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam in 1910.

Gaur now available. It is only in this manuscript that we get an account of Rajmahal in some detail.

The subject-matter in the manuscript is divided into four parts, to which is added an introduction explaining the genes is of the book and the subject covered. The first part deals with the remains at Rajmahal of the time of S͟hāh S͟hūja'. The second part concerns with a few mosques, the *Haveli*, the bridge, the Firozā Mīnār, the citadel of the Gaur Sulṭāns, the temple at Rāmakeli and the monuments associated with the Saint Mak͟h-dūm Jahāniyān Jahāngas͟ht. Among the citadel monuments he talks of *Masjid Qadam Sharif*, but it should be noted that this buiding is not a mosque. The third part describes the remains at Pandua— the Ādinā Masjid the dargāhs of Ḥaḍrat Nūr Quṭb 'Ālam and Ḥaḍrat S͟hāh Jalāl Tabrezī. In the last chapter he gives a list of the rulers together with the dates of their rule (very often wrong) at Gaur.

For purposes of easy reading I have divided the conten ts into different paragraphs and given sub-headings in English. The equivalent numbers have been added in figures. At the end of the text a list of contents is prvided for ready reference. The folio numbers are given within brackets. This entire appendix has been numbered separately.

Ahmad Hasan Dani

CONTENTS

احوال گوڑہ و پنڈوہ

[f. 1] تمم بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم بالخیر

کیفیت مکانات قلعه گوڑه (1) لکهنوتی وغیره

تصنیف عاصے شیام پرشاد منشی

خلاصه احوال عمارات و مکانات قلعه گوڑه (2) لکهنوتی و مساجد و خانقاهات قصبه پندوه (3) شریف دار السلطنت قدیم سلاطین ماضیه بنگاله و راج محل سابق مختیار بحاکم نشین بنگاله انچه در ماه نومبر و دیسمبر سنه ۱۸۱۰ عیسوی همرکاب خداوند خدایگان فیاض زمان عالیشان نیر اعظم نوآ مین جلب عیسی مریم سپهدار سالار فرنگ بافر و فرهنگ زینت بخش کرسی عز و جاه زیب افزای افسر و کلاه صاحب کرم دوران معدن امن و امان مهبط الطاف و احسان مصدر اعطاف فراوان فروغ باصره بیمنش انتباه عقل و دانش واقف اسرار اسمانی دیده افروز افلاطون یونانی فیلسوف زمان و زمین ارسطو فطرت اسکندر تمکین داروی خسته دلاں آفاق حاتم جود مسیح اخلاق ابر مطر مزرعه امال کلسن (4) جود و افضال موسس اساس عزت و قدردانی بانی مبانی رافت و مهربانی همای اوج هنر پروری کیمای (5) مس سخن کستری -

1. In the original ک is used for گ.
2. This is the same word which is usually spelt as Gaud.
3. This is Ḥaḍrat Pandua in Malda district.
4. Read گلشن
5. Read کیمیای

چو سیاره مشتری سر بلند* نظرهاے او یک بیک سودمند -

اعنے میجر ولیم فرنکلن صاحب بهادر رکولٹن(1)افسر که جمهور عالم و بندگان خیر خواهان را بفیض رسانیهاے عمیم و کام بخشهاے جسیم خویش خوشان و فرحان و لشکر و سپاس رطب و عذب البیان و از دریا دلے بسان ابر بهاران گشت امید امیدواران از باران درم و دینار سیراب میدارد -

توان گفت او را سحاب کرم* که دستش چو باران فساندی درم

[f. 2a] ایزد تعالی و تقدس ذات مجمع الصفات آن معالی همم ذوالجود و الکرم را از وقایع نازله و حوادث مکاره دور بر کنار و محفوظ و محظوظ داشته ترق عمرو دولتش و تزاید جاه و حشمتش داراد -

باد عمرش بقیاس باد عیشش بردوام* باد قدرش در ترق بادجاهش مستدام

گردون بمراد دل فیروزش باد * خورشید زروی مهر و نورش باد

امروز به همیشه ز دیروزش باد* هر هفته سه عید و چار نوروزش باد

از ابتداے سنگین دالان وغیره مکانات شجاعے واقعه شهر راج محل و بلاد لکهنوتی عرف گوڑه از شکست و درست دیده و براء العین مشاهده نموده و از حقایق و خصایص انجا معلوم شده بموجب حکم فیض شیم آنجناب این بے بضاعت چار سوی عبارت و استعارت برسبیل اختصار و اجمال بتالیف سطری چند ماجرای احوال مذبوره پرداخت که در طرفه العین بمطالعه آن صنعت و ندرت و شرفیت و متانت مکانات و حسنات خصال ستوده و سیر نیکو بادشاهان نامدار عالے مقدار و امرای ذوی الاقتدار که کنایه از تعمیر و بنا کنندگان است بدریافت آید و موجب تحسین و آفرین کرد و امید از منشیان بلاغت نشان فصاحت بیان آنست هرجا سهوی و خطای ملحوظ شود بشفاعت

1. Regulating officer. See J. A. S. B. 1894. P. 86.

صواب محو ساخته باصلاح منت بر راقم عقیدت بنیاد شیام پرساد گذارند که الانسان مرکب مع الخطا و النسیان ـ

بپوش گر بخطای رسی و طعنه مزن* هیچ نفس بشر خالی از خطا نبود

مخفی نیست و از تواریخ سلف مشهور و معروف است که دار السلطنت قدیم سلاطین ماضیه جنت البلاد بنگاله اول در پنده[1] شریف و بلاد لکهنوتی اعنے بفتح لام و سکون کاف هندی موصوله بهاے خفے شهری بود در بنگالا [2] که تمام آن مملکت را در سوالف ایام لکهنوتی [f.2 b] می خواندند و بعد از رای لکهمیه[3] عمل راجه های هنود از ابتدای پنجصد نود و یک (591) هجری مطابق یکهزار یکصد نود و شش (1196) [4] انگریزی موقوف و از محمد بختیار خلجی عمل اسلام و خطبه و سکه اسلام دران دیار جاری شده بحیط تصرف و ضبط ربط ملوک خلج در آمد بعد ازان چندی در ٹانڈه و اکبرنگر اعنے راج محل بوده در وقت جهانگیر بادشاه در دهاکه مقرر شده درانوقت دهاکه بجهانگیر نگر موسوم گشت آخر جعفر خان نصیری ناصر جنگ ناظم صوبه بسبب نفاق و نقاض شاهزاده عظیم الشان از انجا بر خاسته در مرشدآباد دار الایالت صوبه مقرر ساخت الحال در عمل صاحبان عالیشان کمپنی انگریز بهادر ادام الله اقبالهم و دولتهم و افاض علی العالمین برهم و احسانهم که هر غنی و غریب و تونگر و فقیر مملکت وسیع بنگالا و جماهیر رعایا و برایا را از خوان احسان بے پایان

1. Read Panduah.
2. Here he has spelt the word with لا, but in other places له.
3. To be identified with the last Hindu ruler, Lakshmaṇasena.
4. Date of the Conquest of Bakhtyār, see Indian Historical Quarterly, 1954, pp. 133-147

آسوده و سیر فرموده و سایه مرحمت و توان بر کافه خلایق هر دیار
کشیده همه را دست بدعاے دولت و اقبال داشته ابواب فیوضات
نوازش و عنایات بروی همکنان کشود کلکته دار الحکومت هر بلاد
و امصار است چنانچه دراو اخر این خلاصه مجملے از حالات بادشاهان
بلاد مذکور علی الترتیب ذکر خواهد یافت از حساب پنج صد نود
و یک (591) هجری قدے مطابق - یکهزار یک صد نود و شش(1196)
عیسوی ابتدای عمل اسلام لغایت نهه صد هفتاد و سه (973)هجری
مطابق یکهزار پنجصد شصت و شش(1566) عیسوی سه صد هشتاد و
دو (382) سال دار السلطنت بنگاله در بلاد مذکوره بود بعد ازان
بمصداق اینکه دبیر محذرات تقدیر حجاب نقاب ندارد [f. 3 a] و بر
آوان مقدرو زمان مقرر جمال با کمال و قدرت لایزال بر معنے طلبان حال
چهره نما گردیده هر لحظه نقش بدیع بر روی کار می‌آرد دار السلطنت
از بلاد مذبوره موقوف شده در تحت دهلے درآمد و رونق تازه بهار
گرفت و الله اعلم این خلاصة الاحوال مستمل است بر چهار فصل -

فصل اول در ذکر مکانات و عمارات بنا ساخته سلطان شجاع
واقعه شهر راج محل -

فصل دویم در ذکر مساجد و عمارات و حویلی و دولتخانه
بادشاهان قلعه گوڑه لکهنوتی و ڈهاکرباری رام کیل -

فصل سیوم در ذکر تعظیم و تکریم عمارات مسجد قصبه
پندوه شریف -

فصل چهارم در ذکر طبقه ملوک گوید -

فصل اول در ذکر مکانات و عمارات بنا ساخته سلطان شجاع واقعه شهر راج محل

سنگے (1) دالان ایوانے است معروف در راج محل بر کناره گنگا و عین نظرگاه و گذرگاه و یک طرفش شاه راه عمارتے است معقول و مرغوب که هر منزل و مکانش اگرچه روز بروز خراب میشود تاهم خالی از لطافت و نزاکت نیست هوائے آن نسبت اقصای شهر بسبب واقعه بودن دریا در ناحیت شمال و جنوبش جبال قریب باعتدال است گویند وقتیکه سلطان شجاع از شاهجهان آباد درین بنگاله آمد در راج محل اول سمت مغرب حویلی و هدف آراسته سکونت کرد و راه و بازار درمیان شهر بنا کرده شجاع است پس از شجاع راه اکبری درمیان کوهستان از قلعه اودهنسوه (2) ناله میرفت شجاع بعد از سکونت هدف مچهی (3) بهون و سنگے دالان تعمیر کرده و نیز در جهیل آنند سرور(4) حویلے و دولتخانه و حمام و حوض و فوارهها و جلوخانه و دیوان خاص و عام احداث کرد چنانچه مکانات شکسته و ریخته موجود است از ینجاست راج محل را [f. 3b] حاکم نشین بنگاله گویند وقتیکه باعالمگیر بادشاه قضایا(5) شده شجاع شکست یافته بطرف اشام مفقود الخبر گشت تیاری مسجد و حویلے نهه صد هشتاد و هشت هجری(988) و رفتن شجاع درسنه نود (6) و پنج (95) هجری گشت کتابه مکانات خبرے یافته نشده اما در مسجد

1. Stony.
2. Probably a local rivulet.
3. The fish palace probably of the type we have in Agra Fort.
4. Correctly Ānand Sarowar (a pleasure pond).
5. The phrase appears to have been used in the sense of "doomed".
6. The third digit is omitted.

سنگے که تعمیرش از سنگ مرمر است این آیته دلیل رهنمای سرمنزل
آرادت و اعتقاد اهل اسلامیان است ـ

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم و به نستعین

ان اول بیت وضع   یا ایها الذین امنوا اذا   و من حیث خرجت
للناس الذی ببکة   نودی للصلوة من یوم   فعول وجهک شطر
مبارکاوان المساجد   الجمعة فاسعوا الی ذکر   المسجد الحرام و
الله فلا تدعو مع   الله وذرو و البیع ذلکم   ما حیث کنتم فولو
الله احداً   خیر لکم و کم یعلمون   وجوهکم شطره

ابو بکر   عمر   الله   محمد   عثمان   علی

باقی از غایت شیوع ممتاز اظهار هست

در ذکر انند سرور (و) مسکن شجاع

انند سرور نام جهیلے مابین جنوبی راج محل بر مفاصله نیم کروه (1) از سنگے دالان چشمه ایست پهنا که تولش شرقاً و غرباً بکوهستان میرسد وهم بدریای کلان پیوستگی دارد گلهاے نیلوفر و اقسام گلهاے رنگارنگ پیدا می شود فضاے مرغوب دارد سلطان شجاع مشرق برلب جهیل مذکور دولتخانه و محل‌سرا و جلوخانه و حوض و حمام و باولی و فوارەها احداث کرده و نیز اکثر مساجد و مقابر ساخته سلطان شجاع موجود است الحال همه مکانات مسمار و خراب شد گویند که نواب قاسم علیخان صوبه دار بنگاله اکثر آلات و اروات آنرا بر داشته ناکیسر باغ بیاراست اما احاطه حمام و جلوخانه و حوض و باولی مخربه و شکسته هنوز بر جا است

1. Kros – 2 miles.

حمام(Ghusal Khānā)اعنے غسلخانه مشتمل پنج خانه است که خانه اولین آن سرد و تر و خانه [f. 4 a] دوم گرم و تر و خانه سیوم گرم(و) خشک تعمیر کنند خانه اول جاے بستن لنگ و خانه دوم جهت غسل کردن و سیوم تبدیل گاه ملبوسات البسه چهارم مطبخ اطعمه پنجم تنا ولگاه اغذیه غرض اینهمه شکل باشد براے اکل و نیز گاهے آب ها گرم و گاهے سرد آب از راه نهر و باولیها دران میرفت آخر کار شجاع گرم و سرد زمانه چشیده از بجهان رفت چنانچه انحمام آب سرد موجب سردی و تری و نشاط قوت و تقوت بدن است

حمام مذبور بعرض شمال و جنوب هجده(18) قدم و طول مشرق و مغرب چهل و یک (41) قدم و بلندی آن پانزده(15) قدم معه پنج طاقچه است ۔

حوض مدور و مربع اعنے چهار گوشه که نهرش از جهیل بمقابله چند قدم جاریست بعرض چهل و چهار (44) قدم و طول مشرق و مغرب هفتاد (70) قدم و درمیان حوض نشیمن اعنے جاے نشست و تفریح طبع واقع است ۔

جلوخانه متصل حمام به بلندی بست پنج (25) قدم مکانے است طویل که طولش یکصد سی و سه(133) دست میرود و عرض سی(30) دست جاے ماندن سواران و چیله هاے خاص بر کناره جهیل واقع است و باغ و فواره از زیر زمین در ان بود اثارش پیدا ست

باولی و فوار خانه و ذخیره آب بعرض جنوباً شمالاً هفتاد (70) دست و طول هفتاد و دو (72) دست و ستونها باولی مدور شش اند اعنے چهار پهل که فی پهل سه دست است ۔

شیش خانه(1) زیر دارد سقفش از خست و خانها بالا کوچک

(1) Probably Shish khana or Mirror Palace, as we have in Agra and Lahore.

کوچک است دروازه شمال رویه دارد بالای حوض چهار گنبد طول شش قدم و پنها سه قدم -

دیوان خاص بود که در انجا اکثر مجرا می شد و نیز زیر آن مکان جلوس سلطان شجاع و عدالت بود در حوض چهار پنج جا نل مسے پنہا یک بالیست و طول یک و نیم دست برای کشیدن آب در حمام و فواره از بالاے حوض زیر زمین به ترتیب کندیده شده هر گاه کشاده میشد آب تا حوض زیرین حمام میرفت و فواره میشد و آب از باولی واقعه زیر حوض (f. 4 b) از چرخ بالا میرفت و هرگاه نل مسدود میشد آب بند میگردید و متصل حوض بالا ذخیره آب سه دست عمق بود آخر در وقت قاسمعلیخان خراب شد— و نیز ذکر است که شجاع اول در قلعه گوڑه در فیروزپور جنوبے از قلعه مذبور حویلے و دولتخانه آراسته قیام داشت و قبکه (1) عازم هندوستان شد حویلی و دولتخانه را بشاه نعمت الله ولی پیر مرشد خود سپرد که سلطنت انمکان نماید بعد ازاں هرگاه اورنگ زیب عالم گیر بادشاه شدند نواب دلیل خان(2) وزیر خود را فرمود که شاه نعمت الله ولی پیر شجاع در بنگالا نگاهداشت سپاه میکند او را گرفتار ساخته بحضور حاضر کردند که او ظاهرا قصد تاج و تخت دهلی دراد دلیل خان (2) در بنگالا آمد شاه نعمت الله ولی از کشف باطنی خود دریافت که فرستاده عالمگیر است آخر دلیل (2) خان در بوکلا گهات در دیار مهاندا(3) فرش بندی کرده برای عبور دریا متوجه شد فتح یار خان پسر خود را حکم کرد که بامردمان افواج

1. Read وقتیکه

2. The real name was Dilir khān, See History of Bengal, ed. by J.N. Sarkar, Vol. II, P. 371.

3. A river which flows not far from Gaud.

غیره نموده برود پسرش عبور می‌نمود بقفا الهی پل شکست گردیده درمیان دریا غرق گردید گویند که شاه نعمت‌الله در عین عبور نمودن فتحیارخان دست بری خدا نهاده (1) گفت که این ظلم بر فقیر چیست آخر بغضب الهی پل شکست و او غرق گردید دلیل خان (2) استاده سیمانه بعد سه روز لاش فتحیار خان یافته شد او را متصل مسجد قدم رسول مدفون کردند دلیل خان (2) نزد شاه نعمت الله ولی رفته عذرها کرد و بپادشاه نوشت که ایشان ولی اند داعیه فوج و ملک ندارند بعد ازان بشاه جهان آباد رفت ـ

فصل دویم در ذکر مکانات مساجد و عمارات و حویلی و دولتخانه بادشاهان قلعه‌گوڑه لکهنوتی

(Qadam Sharif) مسجد(3) قدم شریف بناساخته نصرت شاه پسر حسین شاه سید اشرف الحسینی [5 a] یکے از سلاطین سلف بنگاله که هم بادشاه بنگاله او را می گفتندی درون احاطه خاص بادشاهے عمارت عالی‌شان و مکان جنت نشان بکمال ابهت و رفعت زیارتگاه خلایق است ذکر است که قدم رسول پیشتر در مقام قصبه پنڈوه بود مخدوم شاه جلال تبریزی از مخدوم شاهجهانیان بارزو گرفته زیارت میکردند آخر حسین شاه زیارت کرده قدم رسول را درین قلعه گوڑه آورد نصرت شاه پسرش مسجد بنیاد نهاد بعضے گویند که در سنه نه صد سی و یک(931)

(1) دراز کرده
(2) The real name is Dilīr Khān.
(3) This is not a mosque. See the English text.

هجری تعمیر مسجد شد چنانچه الحال زیارتگاه عوام الناس است کتابه دروازه‌هاے آن نبجه تحریر می درآید نقل کتابه دروازه قدم شریف قال الله تعالی من جاء بالحسنه" فله عشره امثالها بنی هذ الصحر (1) المطرة التی فیها من اثر قدم النبی صلی الله علیه و سلم السلطان المعظم المکرم ناصر الدین و الدنیا ابو المظفر نصرت شاه السلطان ابن حسین شاه السلطان بن سید اشرف الحسینی خلد الله ملکه و سلطانه و اعلی امره و شانه فی سنه سبع و ثلثین و تسع مایه اعنی سنه نهصد سی و هفت (937) هجری قدس و هم ایضا

خط سنگے که طول سه دست پا و بالا و عرض یکدست نیم پو بر در قدم شریف بر زمین افتاده بنی هذا الباب فی عهد السلطان العالم و العادل سید السادات منبع السعادات خلیفة الله بالحجه" و البرهان غوث الاسلام و المسلمین علاء الدنیا و الدین ابو المظفر شاه حسین السلطان بن سید اشرف الحسینی خلد الله ملکه و سلطانه فی الثانی و العشرین من شهر محرم تسع و تسعمایه" اعنی تاریخ بست دویم شهر محرم نهصد و نه هجری (909) نقل کتابه بر در احاطه قدم شریف نصر من الله فتح قریب و بشر المومنین لا الاه الا الله محمد رسول الله [f. 5 b] و نیز بر سنگے این کتابه فارسی است معلوم شد که شخصے سید ظاهرا خادمان قدم رسول بود او فوت کرده آن سید را در زیر قدم رسول مدفون کردند

چو جان را داد جان بیک از تمنا* بزیر پا رسول الله خسپید
چو تاریخ و فاتش جستم از عقل * خرد گفتا (که) می رحمت ببوسید

و نیز یک دروازه متصل دایره قدم شریف ساخته سلطان شجاع است گویند که وقتیکه سلطان شجاع برای نماز در مسجد قدم شریف

الصفة المطهرة و حجرها (؟)

می آمدند این دروازه بنا ساخته از ین دروازه تا مسجد رفته و الحال چند کس قاریان در قرآن و کتاب خوانی مامور اند مشاهره از کچهری مداپور مرشد آباد می یابند باقی راست دروغ بگردن را وی و گویند که دروازه آن پیش ازان ساخته حسین شاه است که هر دو پدر و پسر بمقتضای الدنیا مزرعه الاخری نیکنام جاوید و عاقبت بخیراند

در خوبی مینار فیروز شاه

(Firoza minar) میناره فیروز شاه مشهور بهلاٹ فیروز شاه بطرف شمال قدم رسول بیرون قلعه خاص است عمارتے است نهایت عالی و منزلے است لغایت بلند که نظیر آن در بلاد بنگالا کمتر نشان دهند مشتمل است بر چهار درجه اولین آن از سنگ است و سه درجه از خشت سرخ که سرخی آن همچنان سرخ نمایان است طول آن شصت دست و هر واحد درجه آن مثمن (1) یعنی هشت پهل که فی پهل هفت و نیم دست عرض دایره دارد سر مینار دو درجه بالاخورد خورد شکسته افتاده است گویند پیرو نام میر عمارت آن مکان بود وقتیکه منديله مذبور تیار شد و آرایش یافت بادشاه بالاے آن رفته ملاحظه کردند میر عمارت مذبور عرض کرد که غلام ازین هم بهتر تیار میتواند کرد بادشاه براشفت که چرا بهتر تیار نکردے پس میر عمارت مذکور را بر زمین انداخت و فوت کرد متصل مینار [f. 6 a] مدفون کردند تاریخ بناء آن خبری یافته نشد از وقایع فیروز شاه معلوم شد که در سنه هشتصد و یک (801) هجری بنا کرده که آن را چهار صد بست و چهار (424) سال میشود وکتابه که در سنگ نصب بود

(1) Actually it is twelve-sided.

اینست المويد الدنيا و الدين المجاهد فی سبیل الله خلیفه الرحمان السلطان بالحجه و البرهان سیف الدین و الدنيا

در خوبی و توصیف عمارت نٹن مسجد

نٹن مسجد (Nattan or Lattan mosque) درمیان قلعه گوڑه از حویلی و محلات خاص بادشاهی بر مفاصله نیم کروه جانب جنوب و مایل مشرق واقع است مسجد مذبور بعرض جنوباً شمالاً سی و هشت (38) دست طول مشرق و مغرب پنجاه (50) دست و بلندی آن معه عمق سی و هفت (37) دست از پایه سنگ که یکپایه آن مثمن اندرون و سقف دروازه برگوشه شمال به ترتیب محرابے سمت مشرق و یک گنبد کلان بطول برابر درمیان خانه و هشت ستون سنگے مثمن در دیوار و قبله خانه است تعمیرش از خشت‌ها منقش رنگارنگ سرخ و سبز و زرد و سفید (1) اگرچه الحال تمام شکست و ریخت گردید اما زیب و صفای آن همچنان تازگی و پاکیزگی‌ها دارد فی الحقیقت از رویت و نگاه همچو مکان مکلف فروغ پذیری وضیا اندوزی طواف کنندگان و معتقدان و باغث نزهت و طراوت نظارگیان و تماشائیان است

زهی صفای عمارت که در تماشایش* بدید باز نگردد نگاه از دیوار

و بر دروازه مشرق آن تالابے بعرض یکصد بست (120) دست مشرق و مغرب و طول جنوب شمال دو صد هشتاد (280) دست نور بصر افزای زایران بوسعت و نسحت تمام بناء قدیم است مردمان وارد

(1) درنگار مینا کار علی‌الترتیب است و خشت ها که بصنعت و ندرت تمام در محراب ها موصل است.

و صادر و مسافرین و مترددین و هر مخلوقات خدا از آب تالاب مذبور سیراب و تروتازه میشوند

هر کجا چشمه بود شیرین * مردم و مرغ و مور گرد آیند

[f. 6 b] سبحان الله آنچه عمارتے است عالی و مکانے است که باوجود شکستگی و خرابی تاحال خوبی و بز(ر)گی آں موجب تحسین و افرین بنا کننده در دین و دنیا و زمین و زمان بمصداق این قال است من جاءَ بالحسنه" فله عشر امثالها

نه این ساقی نه این گوهر نه این خمخانه میماند

مگر از همت صاحب دلاں افسانه می ماند

از انجا که تعمیر عمارات مساجد الله بجز این یقین دیگر آمده جناب خداوند زمین و زمان هست و خلاصه مقاصد بانی جزاین نیست به بیند هر کسے جائی بنا می نماید در حق بانی دعاے بیشتر الحق بانی این مسجد سزاوار است باینکه طاب الله سراه و جعل الجنت سواه در شان و می نتواں گفت کتابه تاریخ بناءُ مسجد خبری یافته نشد کندیده بردند بنا براں درینجا درج شدن نتوانست و الله اعلم -

در ذکر قلعه دولتخانه بادشاهے

The Royal Citadel

قلعه خاص و احاطه محل خاص بادشاهی معه دیوان خانه و جلوخانه و خزانه کوٹهری وغیره که آنرا ملک کهنه و بست گزی میگویند درمیان حصار شهر پناه واقعه بود الحال باوجود یکه همه مسمار و خراب و از شرف المکان با تمکین گزشته نظر آمده اما از مشاهده آثارانش مشاهده شد که عمارات نزهت آیات و اقسام اما کین و

ایوان دلپذیر و فوارههاے رنگین بهار بود باشد چنانچه درگرد دولتخانه
و محلات خاص بادشاهی اکثر تالاب‌های دلکشا و فرحت افزا و حوض
نزهت پیرا و طراوت اما که واقع است آنچه نوشته شد واقعی است
دیوار قلعه خاص شکسته به طول بست و پنجدست (25) تا هنوز
مضبوطی و استحکام دارد گویند که در صحن مکان بست دوگزی
بادشاهان و شاهزادگان و اقرباے انها شام و صبح اسپان را جولان
میدادند دروازه خزانه کوٹهری بوسعت و فسحت امتیاز دارد تعمیرش از
خشت و سنگ‌های منقوش است از تفاعش نهجے است که قبل سوار
بفراغت رفتن تواند الحال متصل ان کشت زار است[f. 7 a]چاند دروازه
در یست مشتهر درمیان قلعه خاص گوژه که از عمارات و دولتخانه
بادشاهی بر مفاصله قریبے بنا ساخته رکن الدین و الدنیا ابوالمظفر
شاهجهان شاه سلطان باربک‌شاه دروازه است عالیشان مینو نشان در رونق
و آرایش تراوی نظارگیان کشاده در تحتش نهرها سلسبیل جاری که
بجهت باصره افزاے نظارگیان و راحت پیداے روح و قلب تماشائیان
افاده تعمیر دلپذیرش در سنه هشتصد هفتاد و یک(871) هجری اتفاق
افتاده اگرچه همه شکست و خراب است و از دیوارش اثرے باقی است
که یابی است ازکتاب عبرت اولی الا لباب است گویا که صنعت است
ارباب عشرت مشق و الحال معموره است صحرای است لقودق دراصل
نام چاند دروازه میانه در است گویند که چون بادشاه ازان دروازه
نشانه چاندزده داخل محل سرا و حرم خاص میشد از ینچه بچاند
دروازه مشتهر است کتابه‌اش کتابے است که‌بخط طغرا مرتسم
گردیده و رقم نسخ بربصارت قاریان کشیده حروفش بمقدار عرض وطول

عبارتش که بهزار دقت خوانده شد اینست

الحمد اله ذی الالاء المنن * رب تنزه عن نوم و عن و سن
ثم الصلواة علی المختارمن مضر*خیر الانام النبی السید المدنے[1]
محمد خاتم الرسل الکرام و من* لولاه سبیل الهدی والحق لم تبن
و آله معدن التقوی و صحبته * التابعی الله فی سر و فی علن
و بعد من تی علی جوار رحمته*ازری بجود السحاب الهاطل الهتن
السلطان امان الدنیاو رکن الدین*سلطاننا باربک شاه العالی الفطن
ابن سید الذی شاع فی الامصار*سلطان محمود شاه العادل الحسن
هل سلطان العراقین ثرفی کرم* کبار بکشاه فی الشام و فی الیمن
کلا فما فی بلاد الله قط له*البذل و الجود و هذاواحد الزمن
و داره کالجنان رائق نزه * و مجلب للمغی و مد من الشجن
نهر جری تحتها کا السلسبیل * اجنالها فاز بالفقراء ذی المحن
و بابها راحة للروح ریحاناً * لذی المحبت واحد کا لشطن
باب علی الشط مشراح اسمه* میانه در وهی دخول خاص لبن
احدی وسبعون سنةوالثماناته[2]*وذلک مبناه زمان العیش فی الاون
فاله اسالته تخلید دولته * ما غرد الطیر فی روض علی الفتن
در دور سلطنت شاهجهان پناه* رکن الدین والدنیا ابو المظفر
سلطان حسین[3] شاه خلد الله * ملکه و سلطانه بنای میانه در
سنه احدی و سبعون و ثمانمایه شده

1. Read المدن
2. Read ثمانمایة
3. A mistake for Bārbak.

در ذکر کوتوالی دروازه

(Kotwali Darwaza) [F. 7 b]

دروازه کوتوالی خشتے ریخته کاری مصالحه دار بمضبوطے و محکمے تمام جنوب رویه بعرض چهار دست و طول بلندی آن بست و نهه(29)دست واقع است سقف و دیوار بالاخانه شکسته افتاده درمیان دیوار دروازه در چپ و راست سلاح خانه ها اعنے جای داشتن توپ‌ها خورد خورد و بندوق‌ها که انرا صنادیق بنادیق توان گفت و دیگر اینقسم اسلحه ها به ترتیب و آمین شایسته دیده شده و متصل دروازه قبر شاه خاکی ولی محافظ است گویند که در بادشاهان بنگاله معهود بود که هر شب پنجهزار بنده نوبت به نوبت پاسبانی میکردند و بر در حاضر میماندند بنابر ان بر دروازه دارالاسلحه مقرر بود و نیز نوبت خانهٔ عالی پنج وقت شادیانهٔ نواختهٔ میشد و الله اعلم

در احوال پل

(Bridge)

کیلاهٹا متصل کوتوالی دروازه پل کلاهٹه مشهور مسمے باسم سانکهو در میان حصار قلعه بمفاصله قریبے کوتوالی دروازه شمال رویه مایل بمشرق واقع است از انجا راه خشتے میرود و بر دروازه پل مذبور بر ستون سنگے که تفاوت از پل ایستاده است کتابه آن بخطے که منصوب است حرفهایش محلوک شده بنابر صاف خوانده نشده امابقیاس و قرینه معلوم شد که ایت الکرسی قرآن شریف که برای دفع بلیات بالاے دروازه ها منصوب میسازند نوشته است اما البته تمام است

در ذکر مسجد مهاجن ٹوله

مسجد (1) مهاجن ٹوله (Mahajantola mosque) اگرچه دیده نشده اما از کتابه آن که از سنگ افتاده بنقل در امد معلوم شد که مسجد مذکور بنا ساخته یوسف شاه بن باربک (بن) السلطان محمود شاه بود کتابه آن اینست قدبنی هذا المسجد الجامع السلطان الاعظم المعظم شمس الدین و الدنیا ابو المظفر یوسف شاه ابن باربک السلطان ابن محمود شاه السطان خلد الله ملکه [f. 8 a] و سلطانه فی التاریخ غره ماه محرم سنة ثمانین و ثمان مایة اعنے غره ماه محرم سنه هشتصد و هشتاد هجری (880)

در توصیف مسجد محمد بیگ

مسجد (1) بیگ محمد عرض بیکی متصل حصار بتفاوت قلعه خاص بادشاهی جاے کرامت و شرافت چنانچه عمارتش تا هنوز قایم و برپاست تعمیرش در سنه یکهزار پنجاه و پنج (1055) هجری شده کتابه آن بنجه تحریر می شود

بیگ محمد بساخت معبد اسلامیان * زیب ده و با صفا هست مبارک مکان
جست چون معمار عقل قطعه تاریخ آن * گفت امام خرد مسجد بافیض دان
سنه 1055

1. This Mosque is not existig now.

در ذکر حویلی(1) شکسته

(The ruined haveli)

دهن پتی سوداگر بعد از پل سانکهو بمفاصله نیم کروه حویلی و عمارات دهن پتی نام سوداگر که نهایت متمول عمده تجار بود واقع بود همگی شکست و مسارگردید اما کریوه و بلندی آن تا هنوز نمایان است گویند که هرگاه سوداگر مذکور حویلی و عمارت خود تعمیر و تربیت میکرد بادشاه حکم کرد که آلات و سرانجام عمارت کسے از شهر ندهد و به اهک پزان تاکید رفت که چیزی اهک سنگ که در عمارت سازی جز اعظم به نسبت دیگر آلات است بلکه برینش منحصر بران است بدست او فروخت نسازد و تیار نکرداند سوداگر مذکور که نهایت دولتمند بود خرمهره را سوخته اهک تیار ساخته حویلے خود آرست و الله اعلم بالصواب

حقیقت دخل دروازه

(Dakhil Darwaza)

دخل دروازه شمال رویه به طول بست (و) پنج قدم برمفاصله پاو کروه مسجد سونا دروازه بود بغایت مستحکم گویند که بادشاهان بعد از نماز و طواف مسجد و سیر و شکار و تفریح طبع ازان دروازه داخل قلعه خاص میشدند و نیز چهاونی افواج و سواران در انجا می بود بر سر دروازه مذبور تالاب ها عمیق پهین که آب آنها [f. 8 b] شیرین و

1. The Haveli is not traceable now.

خوشگوار واقعه است الحال بسبب جنگل که مانع آفتاب دهم برگ‌هاے درختان دران افتاده پوشیده و پراگنده می شود مضر و ناگوار است عمارات و سقفهاے دروازه مذکور اکثر شکست و ریخت گردید انچه باقی است ازان خوبی و زیبای آن هنوز همچنان است و هو اعلم پیاض (1) باڈی که از قلعه خاص احاطه بادشاهی بمفاصله نیم کروه طرف شمال برگوشه مشرق واقع است تالابے است کلاں مربع که هر چهار گردش نیم کروه خواهد بود بناء تالاب مذکور قدیم معلوم شده اقسام ماهی بسیار است اما هر چهار طرف تالاب جنگل صحاب وراه بدشواری میرود و غیر از سواری فیل عبور مر در نمیتواند شد تالاب مذکور موسوم پیاض باڈے است

رام کیل ڈهاکر باڈی
(Temple at Ramkeli)

استهان(2) پرسیده بردهان(3) گوڈه الیرےمهارانی دیبی و ٹهاکر باڈی مدن موهن از نام رام‌کیل درمیان احاطه دوازده کروهی شهر پناه بر مفاصله نزدیک جائیست پوجه و پرستش‌گاه اهل هنودان که در ماه چیت هر سال مردمان جاتریان از بهکت و ارادت قافله قافله براے درشن و پوجه دران مکان بهکهیه پرمان آمده برای پرمار تهه(4) یعنی عاقبت خود دهرم و پن (4) حاصل میسازند و نیز متصل آن اکثر تالابهاے براے اسنان (4) و کریا (4) کرم برهمنان و فقرا و

1. It is known today as Piās Bari.
2. Meaning place.
3. Stands for the Sanskrit Pradhāna.
4. All these are Sanskrit words.

بنده‌هاے و تپسیان(1) آن استهان واقع است جاتران ازان سیرابے جیب
و جان نموده داخل این میشوند نقل کنندکه در ٹہاکر باڈی رام کیل
مورت نتیانند (2) چیتن مہاپربہو که در بنگالا سده کر (Sudhākara)
و سیدبہانت شده اند و ساکر ملک Sagar Mallik و در آب خاص
هر دو کس برادر باسم روپ Rūpa (و) سناتن Sanātana وزیر بادشاه
بودند بادشاه انها را باین خطاب ساخته معزز میداشت
[f. 9 a] آخر الوقت آن هر دو برادر فقیر شدند نام آنها سناتن
گوسائین و روپ گوسائین نامیدند و در بندرابن رفته مورت مہا (3)
پربہو مدن موهن جیو درپن استهان (4) آورده استهاپت (5) یعنی قایم
نمودند و آن هر دو برادران از ینجا باز بندرابن رفته سماد (6) یعنے
زمین را کندیده در زندگی خود جہنه جوگ(7) و تپسا(8) مزوی گردیدند
و این مکانات جنگل ویران شده مورت دیوتہاے موجود است برهمنان
و جوگیان وابستهان در پوجه و ٹہل و خدمت کرتا رتہه (9) میشوند
چیزی از طریق نذر وپوتر و خرات برای خرچ پوجه و قوت جوگیان و
برهمنان مقرر نیست اما گذران انها از فضل بہگوان(10) بهر کیف
بتوکل شده می آید افسوس است و معلوم نیست که یکدام سبب کے

1. Word of Sanskrit origin.
2. Nityānanda Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the saint of the 15th-16th century A. D.
3. Mahāprabhu Madan Mohan Jīvadarpaṇa.
4. Meaning place.
5. Establishment.
6. Correctly Samādhi.
7. Yogic practice.
8. Meaning Penance.
9. Meaning obligation.
10. Lord.

از راجگان و بادشاهان و حاکمان سلف چیزی برای مصارف و خرچ این استهان مقرر و مرحمت نکردند که قوت صدرحق برهمنان و پوجه کنندگان باسانی میشد الحال گذران انها بمصداق این ابیات میگذرد

مکن فکر معیشت را * اگر قلب صفادارے
خدا خود خانسامان است * اسباب توکل را
کرم نیست روزی زمهر کساں * خدایست رزاق روزی رساں
دل توز هیچ خلق یاری مطلب * در شاخ برهنه سایه داری مطلب
و نیز ای
عزت زقناعت است خواری‌زطمع * باعزت خود بساز و خواری‌مطلب
و نیز در سنسکرت اشلوک گویند

Matimān Chintayet Dharmmam Āhāro N-aiva Chintayet
Āhāro hi Manushyāṇāṁ Janmanā Saha jāyate.[1]

در بیان سونا مسجد
(Sona Masjid)

[f.9b] دربیان سونا مسجد واقع قلعه گوڑه که مسجد مذکور بناساخته نصرت شاه ابن حسین شاه بادشاه بنگاله است عمارت مسجد شریف تمام از سنگ و نیز زمینش از سنگ فرش بود که الحال تمام

1. The verse is written in the Nāgarī character, It means : 'The wise man thinks only of the Dharma. He never thinks of food. The food is created for men with their birth.

خراب و ابتر است مشتمل بر دو دروازه و چهار خانه نماز بعرض طول یکصد و هشتاد (180) دست و بلندی آن بست ویک دست معه گنبدهاے سنگے از هر چهار عبادت خانه یازده یازده گنبد جمله چهل و چهار گنبد جاے ایستادن قطار قطار نمازیان است از ان جمله گنبد اولین بعرض سانزده دست و طول صددست و هر واحد دیگر سه گنبد ده ده دست عرض و طول برابر است و دالانے برگوشه شمال بعرض سی و پنج دست و طول برابر شکسته و افتاده است گنبد اول مسجد جزی جزی درست و سقفش خراب و شکسته است برگنبدهاے اکثر سنگ هاے منقش چه در ستون‌ها و چه درمیان مسجد بکمال ندرت و منعت تعمیر و ترتیب یافته بمقابله رفعت و خوشنمای وسعت الانش کسے دیگر عمارت درین قلعه گوڑه دیده نشده چنان رفعتش را بجاے نشاند که آتش زهمراهی سنگ ماند کلک واقعه نویس از سرخ خوبی منارهاے بلند و خا نها دل پسندش تمام قاصر است ایزد تبارک تعالی صاحب بنا کننده انرا در جنت شاد دارا وکتابه مسجد که دران نصب بود اینست قال النبی صلی الله علیه و سلم مسجداً بنی‌الله تعالی له بیتا فی الجنت بنی هذا المسجد الجامع السلطان المعظم‌المکرم السلطان ابن السلطان ناصر الدنیا و الدین ابو المظفر نصرت شاه السلطان ابن حسین شاه السلطان ابن سید اشرف الحسینی خلد الله ملکه و سلطانه و امره و شانه فی سنه اثنی و ثلثین و تسع مایة یعنی در سنه نه صد (سی) و دو (932) هجری قدسی

[f. 10 a] در توصیف و تعظیم مسجد و مزار مخدوم شاه جلال بخاری

(The Darghāh of Shāh Jalāl)

شاه جلال بخاری مزار و مرقد مخدوم شاهجهانیان جهان گشت قدس الله سره العزیز که از اولیاے و صاحب سلک بودند از احاطه خاص بادشاهے قلعه گوڑه بر مفاصله سه کروه جانب شمال متصل تالاب ساگر دیگهی که تالابے است کلاں و پهین و وسیع واقع و مسجد و درگاه عالیجاه بغایت متبرک و مبارک بدودایره یکی مزار حضرت و دویمی نماز خانه زیارتگاه و طوافگاه عامه خلایق است بر دروازه مزار انحضرت درخت اگر معطر مثل عنبر و اکثر گلهاے مطبوع و دلکشا و نهایت خوشبو و خوش صفا که نسایم نعایش جلایش تازگی بخش ریاحین خواطر معتقدان و ثمایم برکت و لطافتش معطر فرماے دماغ زایران بیت الشرف و الحرام است بکمال طراوت و نزهت نمونه قدرت کامله ایزدی برپاست

برگ درختان سبز در نظر هوشیار * هر ورقے دفتر یست معرفت کردگار
صبا بسبز بیار است باغ دنیارا * نمونه گشت جهان مرغذار عقبےا را

نسیم باغ زاعجاز زنده کردن خاک به
به برد آب همه معجزات عین را

زیارتیان و طواف کنندگان(1) برگ انرا تبرک گرفته از برکات شرف و کرامت آن بحاجت خودها کامیاب و فیضیاب میشوند پریشان نیست ما را خاطر از بے برگ و باریها

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1. زایران و طایفان

چوگل یک غنچه دل داریم و صد امیدواریها
و نیز مصرعه غنچه گردیدم و گل گشتم و بو گردیدام

ایزد بهار پیرای بهارستان موجودات و چمن‌ارای گلستان ممکنات آن برگ و گل امانی امال زایران و ارادتمندان بیت الحرام را از قطرات مطرات تفضلات خود سر سبز و مطر آراسته موجب صواب و طواف بنی نوع انسان داراد کتابه هاے منصوبه مکانات که بخط چوب طغرا و نسخ مزین مزیب است هرچه خوانده شده و بفهم درک ناقص درآمده ایمنست کتابه دروازه اول نصر من الله و فتح قریب و بشر المومنین له خیر حافظاً [f. 10 b] و هو الرحیم الرحمان و نیر بنی هذا الباب السلطان المعظم علاء الدنیا و الدین السلطان الحسین شاه بن سید اشرف الحسینی خلد الله ملکه و سلطانه فی عشر و تسعمایه نقل کتابه مسجد نماز خانه قال النبی صلی الله علیه و سلم من بنی مسجدا له بنی الله تعالی له بیتاً فی الجنت بنی هذا المسجد الجامع فی عهد السلطان غیاث الدنیا و الدین ابو المظفر محمود شاه بن سلطان حسین شاه السلطان خلد الله ملکه و سلطانه فی احدی و اربعین و تسعمایه (941)

فصل سوم در ذکر تعظیم و تکریم عمارات مسجد قصبه پنڈوه

توصیف عمارت مسجد ادینه

(Ādina Mosque)

مسجد آدینه اعنے جامع مسجد درمیان شهر پنڈوه دارالسلطنت قدیم سلاطین ماضیه بنگاله از مزارات مخدوم شاه جلال تبریزی و

نور قطب العالم نورالله مرقدهما و قدس الله سرهما که زیارت گاه زایران و معبدگاه معبدان(1) است بر مفاصله یک کروه جانب مشرق و گوشه شمال مابین احاطه دوازده کروهی قلعه گوڑه است راه از خشت و سنگ ترتیب یافته و سه چهار جا در اثنا راه دره جات دهم اکثرجاه‌ها غار و تالاب و جنگل نیز بانس و اشجار خاردار درچپ و راست واقع و یک پل از سنگ و خشت از نام سانگهو مشهور است مسجد مقدس بناساخته سلطان سکندر بن سلطان شمس الدین برادر سلطان علاء الدین بادشاه اول بنگاله بوده است تمام از سنگ و سقفش از خشت تعمیر یافته گویند که مسجد مشرف وقتیکه تیار شد و بارآیش رسید معه‌مکانات و سائبان سه صدشصت(360) گنبد و ستون سنگے بود الحال همه شکست و ریخت و برزمین افتاده و انچه قایم و باقی است بذکر می‌آید همگی طول مسجد قایم الحال دو صدشصت(260) دست و سی و هشت (38) عرض و پنهاے عمق معه بلندی آن تانصف گنبد هشت و پنجدست خواهد بود و هر یک ستون درپنهاے چهار دست و طول برابر است در مسجد قریب باوسط و نصب تختگاه (2) سنگے نمازگاه بادشاهان و شاهزادگان و اقرباے انها و نیز جاے نشست قاریان و تلاوت کنندگان قران واقع شده مقابل و محاذی آن تختگاه درسه جا قبله خانه کتابه و تحاریر آیات و احادیث و [f. 11 a] قال الله بخط ثلث و طغرا محرف در رواق و محرابها علی الترتیب و این بکمال خوبی و زیبائے

1. Probably معتقدان

2. This is even now known as Bādshāh kā takht but most probably it is a ladies' gallery.

و بضایع و بدایع نصب و بنا و در و دیوارش چون خانه دل ارباب تکلف پرنقش و نگار برپا شده تختگاه و الاجاه مذبور بعرض بست دست و طول سی دست معه هیجده ستون سنگے مدور ثمن اعنے به هشت پهل که فی پهل یکدست پنها و جمله هشت پهل باشد از سنگ سیاه و سفید بوتیره معقول ترتیب است و بعد از نصف مسجد منبر و کتابخانه و قبله خانه آراسته شده بالای قبله خانه بر سنگ اول الله اکبر و نیزان کلمه لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله بعد ازان این کتابه به تحریر خوشخطے زیب ده باصفا رونق مبارک مکان است لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله قال الله تعالی یا ایها الذین آمنو و ارکعو و اسجدو اعبدو انما یعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله و الیوم الاخر و اقام الصلوة و فی الذکواة و لم یخشو الا الله فعسی و لیک ان یکونو من المهتدین اجعلم سقاتیه الحاج و عمارة المسجد الحرام لمن امن بالسه و الیوم الاخر و جاهد فی سبیل الله لا یتون عند الله و الله لا یهدی القوم الظالمین * منبر زینه پایه انست که در اینجا خطبه در بروز عیدین و جمعه صفت و توحید الهی اول بعد ازان نعت پیغامبر و آل اصحاب ایشان و من بعد حکم‌هاے نماز و روزه و حکم هاے خیرات و استاد نیکی کردن و نهی از بدکار یها و بعد ازان نام بادشاه و ابا و اجداد ایشان و دعای دولت بادشاه و خیریت خلق الله خطیب خوانده به امامت جماعت از منبر فرود آمده در رواق و محراب‌ها بر نماز مشغول میشوند جماعت بادای صلواة معتقد شده مردم باو اقتدا میکنند و نماز میگذراند و دعا میکنند و در تختگاه بادشاه و فرزندان و اقربای ایشان

نماز میگذرانند و مقتدیان در جمع ارکان نیعت و اقتدا بهمین امام و
خطیب متصل منبر در محراب میکند و بالاے تختگاه که قبله
اراسته اند برای خوبی و تزین و آرایش عمارت چنانچه معروف است
که در مسجد اکثر جا محراب و رواق میکنند [f. 11 b] امام محرابی
که متصل منبر است همونجا ایستاده می شود و الله اعلم بالصواب
در عمارت نصف مسجد موجوده تا حد نماز خانه و کتاب خانه هفتاد
و پنج (75) ستون از شکست و درست شمار شده که باین حساب جمله
ستون هاے خانه کلان مسجد یکصد پنجاه و پنج (155) ستون سنگے
خواهد بود و کچ کیری زمین و فرش بندی همه از سنگ بیک و
نیره و آین مرتب ساخته و بالای دیوار قبله خانه‌ها و متصل میر
اشکال غریبه و تصویرات نادره اختراعات است بالاے دریچه خورد
بادشاهی که بادشاه ازان دروازه در مسجد شرف بخط ثلث و طغرا
مسطور است امر بناء هذا العمارة المسجد الجامع فی الدولة السلطان
الاعظم الاعلم الا عدل الاکمل الاکرم العادل مفخر السلاطین
العرب و العجم المويد بتائید الرحمن ابو المجاهد السلطان سکندرشاه
خلد الله ظل جلاله الی یوم الموعود کتبه فی التاریخ سنه رجب (1)
سنه سبعه و سبعماية آعنی بتاریخ ششم شهر رجب سنه هفتصد و
هفت هجری ازینجاست که سکندر بادشاه را سخا و شجاع و کریم

1. There is a great controversy regarding the reading of the date. The correct reading appears to be فی التاریخ سنه رجب ست و سبعين و سبعماية (776)

و رحیم و حلیم و عادل و عالم و روزی ده فقرا و درویشان و بے توانان و مسکینان و وحوش و طیور توصیف کند

خورش ده بکنجشک و کبک حمام که یکروز افتد همائے بدام

از محققان معتبر و سیاحان و مورخان معتمد معلوم شد که این قسم عمارت مسجد منور باں خوبی و شکل باین مرغوبے در مملکت وسیع بنگاله و فتح آباد هندکم نظر آمده و کسے جا تعمیر و ترتیب نیافته بصرف مبالغها و لکوک روپیه مکان هائے مسجد مکلف تزین یافته باشد چنانچه شان عالی آن هنوز نمایان است آنهمه ضایع و بدایع استاداں فرهاد مثال شین زمان است الحق در صنایع نقاشی نقاشان متاخرین را در فن قلم پیشه دستمایه باں مایه نمیرسد افسوس هزار افسوس که این چنیں عمارت عالی و مکان مکلف و مبارک شکست وریخت گردید [f. 12 a] و انچه باقیست انهم در اندک ایام خراب و بے بنیاد خواهد شد الله بس باقی حوس فقط

در تعریف و تعظیم مزار حضرت قطب العالم

Ḥaḍrat Quṭb l-'Ālam

احاطه کرامت و اجلال حضرت شیخ نور قطب العالم نور الله مرقده من قصبه پنڈوه متصل مزار حضرت مخدوم شاه جلال تبریزی که گویند استاد انحضرت بودند قریب پنج و شش بیگهه است درمیان احاطه مذبور معه مکانات مسجد و چله خانه و مقابرها و لنگر خانه است متصل دایره درگاه یک مسجد موسوم سوناں که عرض و طول همگی تخمیناً مقدار یک بیگهه خواهد بود واقع و دو نقاره کلان

کلاں از مس و سرب یعنی دمامه که بر دروازه سلاطین و ملوک میباشد از وقت شادی انحضرت درمیان احاطه مذبور همچنان داشته اند اصل مزار در صحن مسجد نماز خانه در زیر ظل شامیانه بانور و قدس(1) الهی واقع است هر سال در ماه شعبان المعظم از غره ماه لغایب تاریخ چهار دهم ماه چهار ده روز اجماع خلایق جهته زیارت و حصول صواب و طواف از فقرا و صلحا و سیادات و مشایخ و اهل الله و حاجتمندان و مریدان و هر عوام الناس میشود و از هر جوانب و اطراف دور دور در درگاه عالیجاه مردم بیمن برکات زیارت و تسلیم و آستانه بوسی فیضیاب و کامیاب خودها می شوند و مریدان اکثر زرو جنس و نقد نذر و نیاز آرند ازان خادمان و جاروب کشان درگاه بلب و نان خودها میرسند و نیز برای اخراجات لنگر خانه و فقرا و درویشان و وارد و صادر تعلقه ها بقدر مداخل شش هزار روپیه از قدیم الایام نیاز درگاه است بالاے دروازه مزار نور قطب العالم قبر سنگے بزرگے از سنگ سیاه تعمیر است کتابه آں بجنسه بنقل در آمد الله اکبر قبر طفل نوح عنایت الله معصوم بن طاهر محمد بن عماد الله بن حسین این سلطان علی سبزواری نور مرقده غره رمضان ۱۰۱۷ الله لا اله الا هو الحی القیوم لا تاخذه سنة النوم له فی اسموات و ما فی الارض من ذالذی یشفع عنده الا باذنه یعلم ما بین ایدهم و ما خلفهم و لا یحطون بشی من علمه [f. 12 b] الا بما شا وسع کرسیة السموات و الارض و لا یوده حفظهما و هو العلی العظیم

وزیر آستانه حضرت ستونے از سنگ است شخصے مراد خان از

1. سنور بنور قطب ایست

معتقدان درگاه بنذر فرستاد مضمونش اینکه استانه حضرت برهان الحق
شیخ نور قطب العالم بنذر فرستاد بتاریخ شهر ربیع الاول سنه هزار
هجری و متصل مزار مبارک در دیوار نماز خانه کتابه آن بخط طغرا و
ثلث که بصنعت و بداعت تمام نصب و رونق ده مکان است و خوانده
شده اینست قال النبی صلی الله علیه و سلم لا اله الا الله من نبی
مسجد الله بنی الله قعر له فی الجنة بنی هذا المسجد السلطان العادل
الباذل شمس الدنیا و الدین ابوالمظفر شاه یوسف السلطان بن باربک
(بن) السلطان شاه محمود السلطان خلد الله ملکه و سلطانه و تعالی
الله امره و شانه فی مجلس الدین هو اعلی المجالس کان ذلک الباب
فی التاریخ یوم الجمعة اربعة و عشرین شهر رجب سنه ثمانین و ثمان
مایة (880) من هجرة النبی صلی الله علیه و سلم

در توصیف و اعزاز و جلال دایره شاه جلال تبریزی

Ḥaḍrat Shāh Jalāl Tabrezī

دایره آستان فیض بنیان قدوه الا صفیا الکرام زبدة اولیاے
عظام حضرت مخدوم شاه جلال تبریزی قدس الله سره واقعه قصبه
پنڈوه معه مکانات و مساجد و خانقاه و لنگر خانه و تالاب و کهری خانه
وغیره قریب چهار بیگهه خواهد بود این مسجد نماز گاه که منظور
نظر انور الهی و مسطره فیض نامتناهی بناشده بود نهایت عالی و وسیع
و در استحکام و ارتفاع ممتاز است گویند که حضرت مخدوم شاه جلال
در قید حیات انرا تعمیر و بنا ساخته اند روزے برای ادای نماز در

مسجد معظم متوجه شدند بنظر مبارک انحضرت درآمد که حضرت رسول الله در نماز مشغول اند شاه جلال از انجا باز می آمدند حضرت رسول الله فرمودند که بیا ای جلال کجا میروی شاه ترک ادب و تعظیم دانشته در لنگر خانه خود آمده نماز ادا کردند گویند که مزار شاه قدس سره درکوه روضه دولت آباد است در ماه رجب المرجب هر سال از ابتدای غره ماه لغایت تاریخ بست و دویم بست و دو روز [f. 13 a] میله فقیران و حاجتمندان و اجماع معبدان و اهل الله و درویشان و بسیاری از حلقه بگوشان ارادت و اعتقاد و زیارت و طواف عامه خلایق میشود عالمی بفیض برکت زیارت داخل صواب و افادت و افاضت می شوند هر روز وقت شام از لنگر خانه فقیران و مسکینان و حاجتمندان رزق می یابند و اوقات خودها بنان و نمک بسر می بردند برای مصارف لنگر خانه دیهات و تعلقه و مواضعات بطریق التمغا که نیاز درگاه است پیشتر بقدر مداخل سانزده هزار روپیه بود حالا کم تربود و جنگل ویران شده قریب شش هزار روپیه محاصل است بصرف لنگر خانه می درآید و روشنی چراغان وقت شام پاره نور ظهور واقعی ظل جلال است گویا چادر از نور برکشیده و بازار انجم بغارت رفته

زهی از پرتو قربت چراغ قدسیان روشن * ز نور شمع اقبالش زمین تا اسمان روشن
توآن شمع ضیاء بخشے که ازفیض تومیگردد * نسان حجله فانوس اطراف جهان روشن

بعد چندی که سایبان شکسته بود شاه نعمت الله ولی پیر مرشد سلطان شجاع انرا بنا ساخته این بیت کتابه تاریخ بناء آن سایبان نصب است

چون این عالی عمارت یافت ترتیب شده تاریخ روشن آستان باد

ازین سنه یکهزار هفتاد و پنج (1075) هجری بر می‌آید و نیز متصل آن بر سنگ دیگر است بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم یا الله یا الله دستگیر الله اینعمارت حضرت شاه جلال است آراست کننده حضرت شاه نعمت الله بر دروازه بهزار اعنی لنگرخانه مسطور و منصوب است تمم بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم بالخیر یا مقیم یا مقیم

جلال الدین شه تبریز تولد * که در مدحش زبانها شد گهر ریز
برایش چاند خان کرد اینعمارت * که اواز عرض اخلاص است لبریز
اگر پر سند که بود جلوه فرما * درین معمار بنیاد صفا خیز
دهن را شست و سوده همچو شاعر * پس انکه باز بان معنی انگیز
جوابش در لباس سال تاریخ * بگو شاه جلال الدین تبریز

در مصرعه آخر سنه هزار هشتاد و چهار (1084) هجری بر می‌آید

[f.13 b] فصل چهارم در ذکر طبقه ملوک سابق دار السلطنت قدیم بنگالا در لکهنوتی وغیره

رای لکهمیه در بلاد لکهنوتی که تمام آن مملکت را در سوالف ایام لکهنوتی میخواندند مدت هشتاد (80) سال ابتدای پنجصد و ده (510) لغایت پنجصد و نود (590) هجری مطابق یکهزار یکصد و شانزده (1116) لغایت یکهزار یکصد نود و شش (1196) عیسوی بادشاهی کرده نهایت منصب و عادل بود هرگز در عمل او دست افو بر ضعیفان نرفته هرکرا انعام و بخشش فرمودی کمتر ازیک لک روپیه

نکردی آخر محمد بختیار خلجی از ملک مغرب آمده با راجه لکهمیه جنگ و جدل کرده تمام بلاد لکهنوتی را بضبط خود آورده در موضع که لکهنوتی است دار المملکت خود ساخت و خطبه و سکه اسلام و مساجد و مدارس و خانقاهات قایم کرد محمد بختیار دوازده سال بادشاهی کرده ابتدای پنجصد نود و یک(591)لغایت ششصد و دو(602) هجری مطابق یکهزار یکصد نود و هفت (1197) لغایت یکهزار دو صد و هشت (1208) عیسوی بعد ازان در سنه شش صد و دو (602) فوت کرد محمد شیران که مهتر امرای خلج بود بادشاه شد و در جنگ علیمردان شهادت یافت مدت حکومت و بادشاهی هشت (8) ماه بود بعد ازان علی مردان علاء الدین خلجی بادشاه شد و خود را سلطان علاء الدین خطاب کرد نهایت ظالم و خونی بود گویند که در عرصه سلطنت علاء الدین علیمردان قطب الدین مالک تاج و تخت دهلی رحلت کرد علاء الدین تا خراسان و اصفهان عمل کرد و خطبه و سکه بنام خود خوانده آخر از دست امرای خلج کشته شد مدت جهانداری او دو سال چند ماه بود اعنی ابتدای شش صد و چهار (604) لغایت شش صد و پنج (605) هجری مطابق یکهزار دو صد و ده (1210) لغایت یکهزار دو صد و یازده (1211) عیسوی بعد از وی سلطان غیاث الدین را که نام اصل وی ملک حسام الدین بود او هم در شهر لکهنوتی دار الایالت خود ساخت مردی خوشخو و نیک سیرت بود رعایا [f. 14 a] در عمل او در رفاهت و آسایش بودند مدت سلطنت او دوازده (12) سال بود ابتدای شش صد و شش(606) لغایت

ششصد و هفتده (617) هجری مطابق یکهزار دو صد و ده (1210)
لغایت یکهزار دو صد بست و سه(1223) عیسوی بعد ازان ناصرالدین
مدت یکسال و چند ماه قابض و حاکم لکهنوتی بود اعنی ششصد و
هجده (618) لغایت شش صد و نوزده (619) هجری بود مطابق
یکهزار دو صد بست و چهار (1224) لغایت یکهزار دو صد بست و
پنج(1225) عیسوی بعد از وی ملک علاءالدین قابض و حاکم الوقت
شده مدت سه سال ابتداے شش صد و بست (620) لغایت شش صد
بست و سه (623) هجری مطابق یکهزار دو صد بست و شش(1226)
لغایت یکهزار دو صد بست و نه (1229) عیسوی سلطنت او بود بعد
از وی سلطان سیف الدین ایبک که باشهامت و جلادت و حسن
اعتقاد بود نه سال ابتدای شش صد بست و چهار(624) لغایت شش
صد سی و دو (632) مطابق یکهزار دو صد سی(1230)لغایت یکهزار
دو صد سه و هشت(1238)بادشاهی کرده بعد از وی اعزالدین طغاے
خان(1) سیزده سال و چند ماه ابتدای شش صد سی و سه(633) لغایت
ششصد چهل و شش هجری(646)مطابق یکهزار دو صد سی و نه(1239)
لغایت یکهزار دوصد پنجاه و دو (1252)حاکم آن دیار منده باخلاق
حمیده اوصاف پسندیده و در مردم سازی ثانی نداشت بعد از فوت او
قمر الدین تمر خان بادشاه شد مدت ده سال ابتدای شش صد چهل و
هفت(647)لغایت شش صد پنجاه و دو(652)مطابق یکهزار دو صد پنجاه
و سه (1253) لغایت یکهزار دو صد شصت و دو (1262) ملک رانی

1. Correctly Ṭughril.

کرده بعد ازان طغرل خان الملقب سلطان غیاث الدین بست و شش (26) سال ابتدای شش صد پنجاه و سه (653) لغایت شش صد هشتاد و دو (682) مطابق یکهزار دو صد شصت و سه (1263) لغایت یکهزار دو صد هشتاد و هشت (1288) بادشاهی کرده بعد ازان غرا خان (1) مخاطب سلطان ناصر الدین بادشاه لکهنوتی شد سه سال و چند ماه بادشاه ماند ابتدای سلطنت او ششصد هشتاد و سه (683) لغایت شش صد هشتاد و شش (686) هجری [f. 14 b] مطابق یکهزار دو صد هشتاد و نه (1289) لغایت یکهزار دو صد نود و دو (1292) عیسوی بود بعد ازان بهادر شاه ناصر الدین (2) از قرایبان او بادشاه شد سی و هفت سال ابتدای شش صد هشتاد و هفت (687) لغایت هفتصد بست و سه (723) مطابق یکهزار دو صد نود و سه (1293) لغایت یکهزار سه صد بست و نه (1329) عیسوی فرمان روا لکهنوتی ماند بعد ازان قدر خان قابض گردید چنانچه لغایت چهار ده (14) سال او نیز حاکم ان دیار مانده ابتدای هفتصد بست و چهار (724) لغایت هفتصد سی و هفت (737) هجری مطابق یکهزار سه صد سی (1330) لغایت یکهزار سه صد چهل و سه (1343) عیسوی بود بعد ازان ملک فخر الدین بلقب سلطان فخر الدین خطاب کرد دو سال و چند ماه بود اعنی ابتدای هفتصد سی و هشت(738)لغایت هفتصد و چهل (740) هجری مطابق یکهزار سه صد چهل و چهار (1344) لغایت یکهزار سه صد چهل و شش بود(1346)بعد ازان علی مبارک او را کشته

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1. Correctly Bughrā Khān.
2. Here the author has omitted two rulers who came in between.

خود را سلطان علاء الدین خطاب کرده در سنه هفتصد چهل و یک (741) بر تخت نشست و در سنه هفتصد چهل و دو (742) فوت کرد مطابق یکهزار سه صد چهل و هفت (1347) لغایت یکهزار سه صد چهل و هشت (1348) ملک الیاس علائی بهنکره او را کشته خود بادشاه شد و سلطان شمس الدین خطاب کرد بهنکره بادشاه سانزده (16) سال بادشاهی کرده اعنے ابتدای هفتصد چهل و سه (743) لغایت هفتصد پنجاه و هشت(758) هجری مطابق یکهزار سه صد چهل و نه (1349) لغایت یکهزار سه صد شصت و چهار(1364) عیسوی بود بعد ازان سلطان سکندر خلف او باد بادشاه شد ادینه مسجد در پنڈوه بنیاد کرد نهایت شجاع و کریم بود خلق الله در عمل او بعیش و راحت میگزراندند سی و دو (32) سال اعنے ابتدای هفتصد پنجاه و نه (759) لغایت هفتصد و نود (790) هجری مطابق یکهزار سه صد شصت و پنج(1365)لغایت یکهزار سه صد نود و هفت(1397) عیسوی بود ادینه مسجد (1) مکانے نهایت عالی بود شکست و خراب گردید بعد ازان [f. 15 a] غیاث الدین پسرش بادشاه گردید او نیز برسم والد خود کریم و آراسته و پیراسته بود سانزده (17) سال بادشاهے کرده ابتدای هفتصد نود و یک (791) لغایت هشتصد و شش(806) هجری مطابق یکهزار سه صد نود و هفت(1397)لغایت یکهزار چهار صد و دوازده (1412) عیسوی بعد ازان شمس الدین عرف سیف الدین بنیره غیاث الدین بادشاه شد سه سال ابتدای هشتصد و هفت (807)

1. از تاریخ کتابه منصوبه مسجد و تاریخ مورخان تفاوت می شود و الله اعلم
—author's note.

لغایت هشتصد و نه (809) مطابق یکهزار چهار صد و سیزده (1413) لغایت یکهزار چهار صد و پانزده (1415) بود بعد ازان شهاب الدین پسر غیاث الدین بادشاه شد مدت سه سال بادشاهی کرده چنانچه ابتدای هشتصد و ده (810) لغایت هشتصد و دوازده (812) هجری مطابق یکهزار چهار صد و سانزده (1416) لغایت یکهزار چهار صد و هیجده (1418) عیسوی بعد ازان سلطان جلال الدین عرف جدو سین پسر کانسی راے هنود که بطمع راج مسلمان شد بادشاه گردید هفت سال (7) حاکم ماند ابتدای هشت صد و سیزده (813) لغایت هشتصد و نوزده (819) هجری مطابق یکهزار چهار صد و نوزده (1419) لغایت یکهزار چهار صد بست و پنج (1425) بعد وی پسرش بر تخت نشست و خود را سلطان احمد خطاب کرد ابتدای هشتصد و بست (820) لغایت هشتصد بست و دو (822) هجری مطابق یکهزار چهار صد بست و شش (1426) لغایت یکهزار چهار صد بست و هشت (1428) عیسوی مدت سه سال بادشاهی کرد بعد ازان ناصر غلام وی بر تخت نشست هفت روز بادشاهی کرده که یکی از امراے سلطان شمس الدین بهنکره او را کشته یکی از فرزندان او را ناصر شاه خطاب کرد بر تخت نشانیدند خلایق در عهد وی منعم و مرفوع الحال بودند ابتدای هشتصد بست و سه (823) لغایت هشتصد چهل و نه (849) مطابق یکهزار چهار صد بست و نه (1429) لغایت یکهزار چهار صد پنجاه و پنج (1455) عیسوی مدت بست و هفت سال بادشاهی کرده بعد ازان باربک شاه بر تخت نشست او نیز سانزده (16) سال ابتدای هشتصد و پنجاه (850) لغایت هشتصد شصت و پنج (865) هجری مطابق ابتدای یکهزار چهارصد

پنجاه و شش(1456)لغایت یکهزار چهار صد هفتاد و یک(1471) عیسوی
در عیش و عشرت گزرایند بعد ازوی یوسف شاه بر تخت (f. 15 b)
سلطنت اجلاس یافت حلیم و سلیم بود مدت شش سال ابتدای هشتصد
شصت و شش(866) لغایت هشتصد هفتاد و یک هجری (871) مطابق
ابتداے یکهزار چهار صد هفتاد و دو (1472) لغایت یکهزار چهار
صد هفتاد و هفت (1477) عیسوی بادشاهے کرده سونا مسجد در
قصبه پنڈوه و نماز خانه نورقطب العالم قدس سره و مسجد مهاجن ٹوله
دراحاطه شهر گوڑه بنا کرده اوست دلیل و اثار نیک سیرت موجود است
بعد از وی سکندر شاه ثانی را بر تخت خلافت جلوس دادند چون
قابل امر سلطنت ندیدند بعد سه روز اورا معزول ساخته فتح شاه
را بر تخت نشاندند وی مردی عاقل و کریم بود مردم را انعام و
نوازش فرمود و فتح ها کرد و در بادشاهان بلاد بنگاله معهود بود که
هر شب پنج هزار بنده نوبت به نوبت پاسبانی کنند و بر در حاضر
باشد بعد ازان یکے از خواجه سرا فتح شاه را کشته بر تخت نشست
و خود را باربک شاه مخاطب گردانید اکثر لشکر وی خواجه سرا
بودند هفت سال بادشاهی کرد ابتدای هشت صد و هفتاد و دو (872)
لغایت هشتصد هفتاد و هشت (878) مطابق یکهزار چهار صد هفتاد
و هشت (1478) لغایت یکهزار چهار صد هشتاد و چهار (1484) بعد
وی فیروز شاه سه سال بادشاهی بود ابتدای هشتصد و هشتاد (880
لغایت هشت صدهشتاد و دو(882) مطابق یک هزار چهار صد هشتاد
و شش (1486) لغایت یکهزار چهار صد هشتاد و هشت (1488)

چاند دروازه من حصار قلعه گوڑه متصل مکانات بادشاهی
و یک حوض و یک مناره که لاٹ بگوڑه مشهور است آراست
گویند که فیروز شاه فقیرے را یک لک روپیه خیرات داد و زرایان
برای نمایش توده آن زر نموده عرض کرد که این را رایگان
نباید کرد در وقت بکار آید بادشاه فرمود نشنیده‌ام که بادشاهان سلف
مال جمع کرده خود خورده اند و لقبش ابو المظفر رکن الدنیا الدین
شاه جهان سلطان فیروز شاه بود اثار چاند دروازه تا هنوز (f. 16 a)
موجود است اما از کتابه دروازه و اخبار مدت سلطنت مطابقت ندارد
بعد ازان پسرش بلقب سلطان محمود شاه یکسال بادشاه بود بعد ازان
مظفر حبشی یکے از بندگان اورا کشته بر تخت سلطنت نشست و خود
را مظفر شاه خطاب کرد بے باک و ظالم بود قضاة و اکابر نیک
مردمان را قتل کرد و سه سال و پنج ماه بادشاه بود ابتدای هشتصد
هشتاد و سه (883) لغایت هشتصد هشتاد و پنج (885) مطابق یکهزار
چهار صد هشتاد و نه (1489) لغایت یکهزار چهار صد نودو یک
(1491) بعد ازان حسین شاه عرف سید علاؤ الدین و الدنیا سلطان
حسین بن سید اشرف حسینی متوطن شهر تبریز که او را بنگله بادشاه
میگفتند و یوسف شاه برادرش بود با مظفر شاه جنگ کرده و او را
کشته بر تخت نشست و خطبه وسکه بنام سلطان علاؤ الدین و الدنیا
حسین شاه بن سید اشرف الحسینی جاری شد صوبه اوریسه و کامروپ
کامچه (1) نیز گرفت یک توپ از ملک کامچها از نام کوچ مردن

1. To be identified with Kāmtā.

آورده بود در شهر گوڈه طرف نهر و هم در شهر و سر راه گوڈه جابجا مسجدها و تالابها و لنگر خانه و امداد خانه و سرائے پخته در ملک راڈه و دکن و اوریسه وغیره آراسته کرده اوست چنانچه دروازه قدم شریف و دروازه درگاه مخدوم شاهجهانیان در شهر گوڈه بنا کرده او زیارتگاه خلایق است [1] خلافت او ابتدای هشتصد و هشتاد و شش (886) لغایت نه صد و دوازده (912) هجری مطابق یکهزار چهار صد نود و دو (1492) لغایت یکهزار پنجصد و هجده (1518) انگریزی بود بعد ازان نصرت شاه پسرش بادشاه شد و ضلع ترهت بقبض خود در آورد آخر ازوست خواجه سرایان در وقت خواب کشته شد نصرت شاه نهایت خوش‌خو و نیک سیرت بود مسجد قدم شریف و مسجد سونا بنا کرده نصرت شاه است مسجد قدم شریف تا حال قایم و مسجد سونا شکست و خراب گردید مدت سلطنت نصرت شاه ابتدای نه صد و سیزده (913) (f. 16 b) لغایت نه صد سی و پنج (935) مطابق یکهزار پنجصد و نوزده (1519) لغایت یکهزار پنجصد چهل و یک (1541) انگریزی بست و سه سال بود بعد ازان فیروز شاه پسرش بادشاه شد نه ماه بادشاهی کرد محمود شاه عم فیروز شاه او را کشته بادشاه شد مدت بادشاهی ابتدای نه صد سی و هفت (937) لغایت نهصد چهل و یک (941) هجری مطابق یکهزار پنجصد چهل و سه (1543) لغایت پنجصد چهل و هفت پنجسال بود از محمود شاه و شیر شاه تا مدت جنگ ماند همایون بادشاه از دهلی[2] بکومک محمود

1. The author significantly uses the word خلافت here.
2. Word for بکمک

شاه آمده بودند چنانچه بعد انتقالش شیر شاه بادشاه شد دروازه جامع
مسجد مخدوم شاهجهانیان بنا کرده محمود شاه موجود است و زیارت
می شود و نیز گویند که محمد همایون بادشاه شهر گوڑه را اباداں
دیده خوش و خورم شده یکسال بادشاه بودند شیر شاه تا نه سال
ابتدای نه صد چهل و دو (942)لغایت نه صد و پنجاه (950) مطابق
یکهزار پنجصد چهل و هشت (1548) لغایت یکهزار پنجصد پنجاه و
شش(1556)انگریزی بادشاه بودند آخر از آتش سوخته مرد بعد ازان پسر
شیر شاه در همان بادشاهی گوڑه نشست چند روز بادشاهی کرده اخر
شاه محمد خان بادشاه خطبه و سکه بنام او خوانده شد مدت سلطنت
او یکسال بود آخر از دست عادل شاه کشته شد در سنه نه صد
پنجاه و یک (951) هجری مطابق یکهزار پنجصد پنجاه و هفت (1557)
عیسوی بادشاه بود بعد ازان بهادرشاه شش سال بادشاهی کرده فوت
شد ابتدای نه صد پنجاه و دو (952) لغایت نه صد پنجاه و هفت
(957) هجری موافق یکهزار پنجصد پنجاه و هشت (1558) لغایت
یکهزار پنجصد شصت و سه (1563)انگریزی مدت حکومت او بود بعد
ازان بهادرشاه ثانی ملقب بجلال الدین بادشاه شد [f. I7] پنجسال
بادشاهی کرده فوت شد ابتدای نه صد پنجاه و هشت (958) (لغایت) نه
صد شصت و دو (962) هجری موافق یکهزار پنجصد شصت و چهار
(1564) لغایت یکهزار پنجصد شصت و هشت (1568) عیسوی بود
بعد ازان غیاث الدین ثانی بادشاه گردید، هیزده یوم بادشاهی کرده
بعدش تاج خان کررانی شش ماه حکمرانی کرد بعد وی برادر وی
سلیمان خان کررانی به بادشاهی نشست و خود را حضرت اعلی.خطاب

6—

کرد مردی کار گذار سقیم الرای متابع الشریعت بود اما شهر گوڑه را
ویران ساخته قصبه حویلی ٹانڈه را آبادان ساخت و دار السلطنت
مقرر نمود و ده سال بادشاهی کرد ابتدای نه صد شصت و چهار
(964) لغایت نه صد هفتاد و سه (973) هجری مطابق یکهزار
پنجصد هفتاد و نه (1579) عیسوی بادشاهی کرده بعد ازان
پسرش داؤد شاه چندی بادشاه شد آخر بدست بندگان حضرت عالی
سلطان العهد خلیفة الزمان جلال الدین محمد اکبر بادشاه غازی که
دران وقت شاهزاده که در راجمحل تشریف فرماں بود و خان خانان وزیر
اعظم داؤد شاه را از ٹانڈه اخراج کرده ٹانڈه را آبادان ساخته گرفتار و
کشته شد و ازانوقت بنگاله و بهار و اوریسه داخل دهلی گردید
لیکن کامروپ کامچهه بدخل نیامد بعد فوت محمود شاه بادشاه راجه‌ها
انجا کسے دیگر دخل ندادند و الله اعلم بالصواب *

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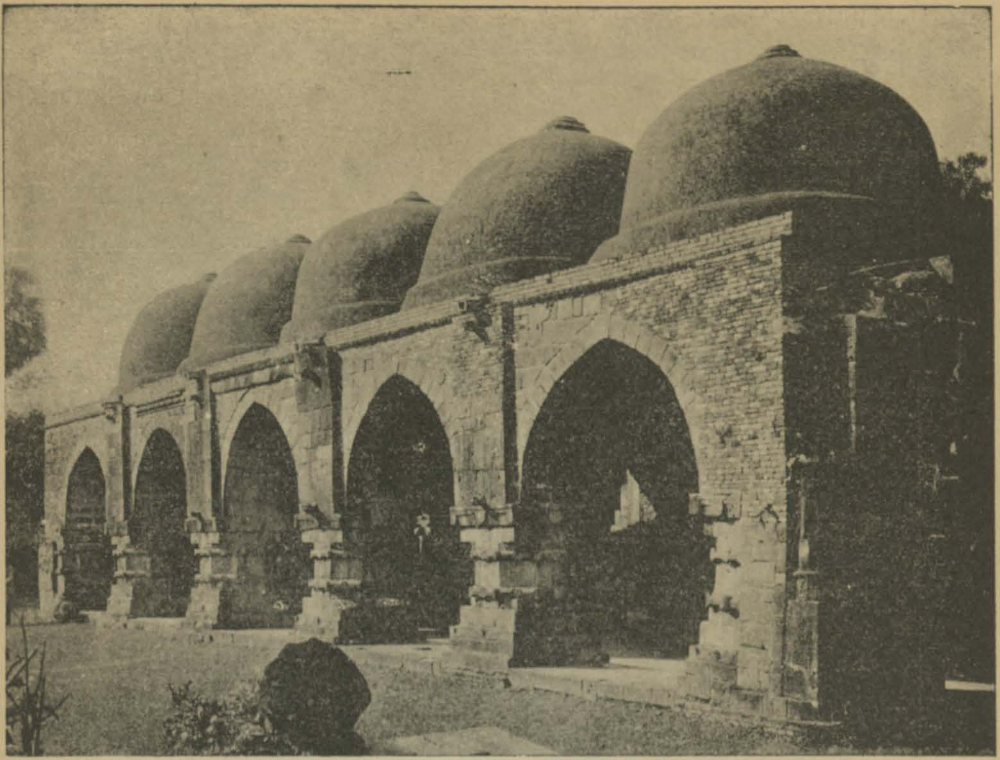
(Excluding the Appendix)

Monuments arranged districtwise

Malda District :---

GENERAL INDEX

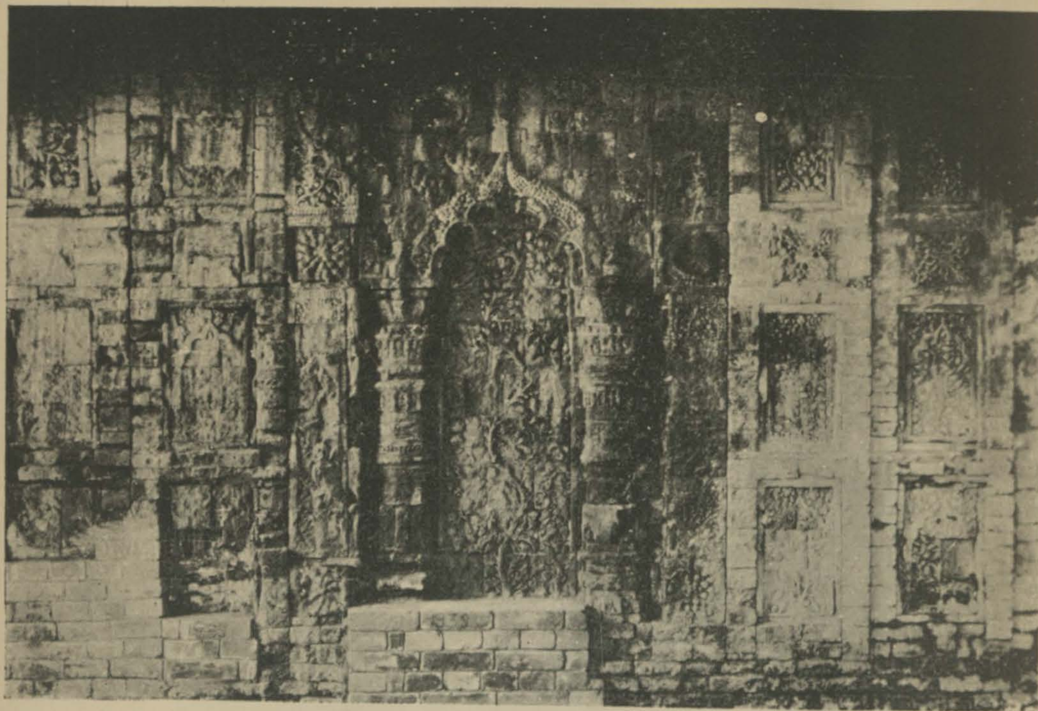
(omitting monuments)



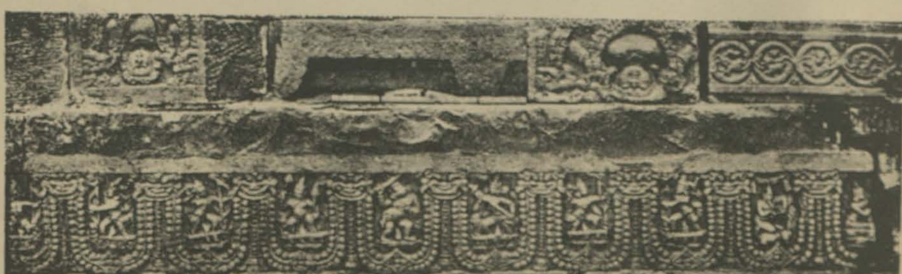
1. Tribeni. Mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi, the eastern facade (1298)



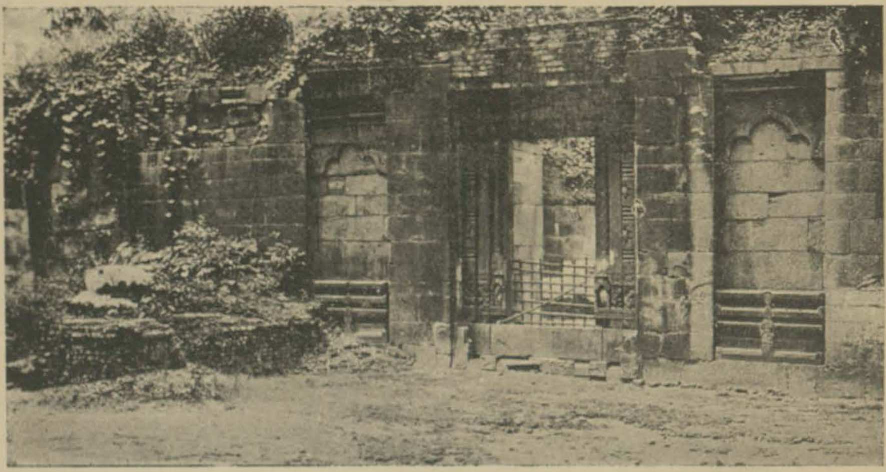
2. Tribeni. Mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi, the interior view



3. Tribeni. Mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi, the interior decoration



4. Tribeni. Tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi, the Hindu Sculptured Stone (Cir. 12th Century)



5. Tribeni. Tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi, the northern face (Cir. 1300)

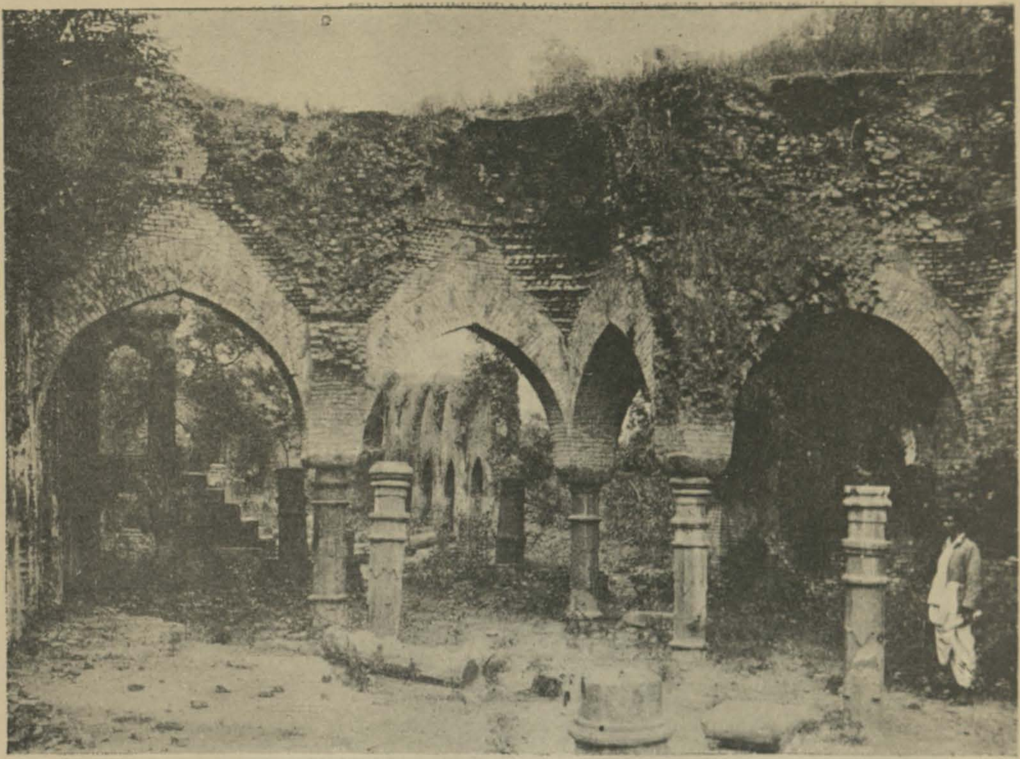


6. Tribeni. Tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi, the Hindu Sculptured Stone (Cir. 12th Century)



7. Chhota Pandua. Tomb of Shah Safi (17th Century)

Plate IV



8. Chhota Pandua. Bari Masjid in ruins (Cir. 1300)

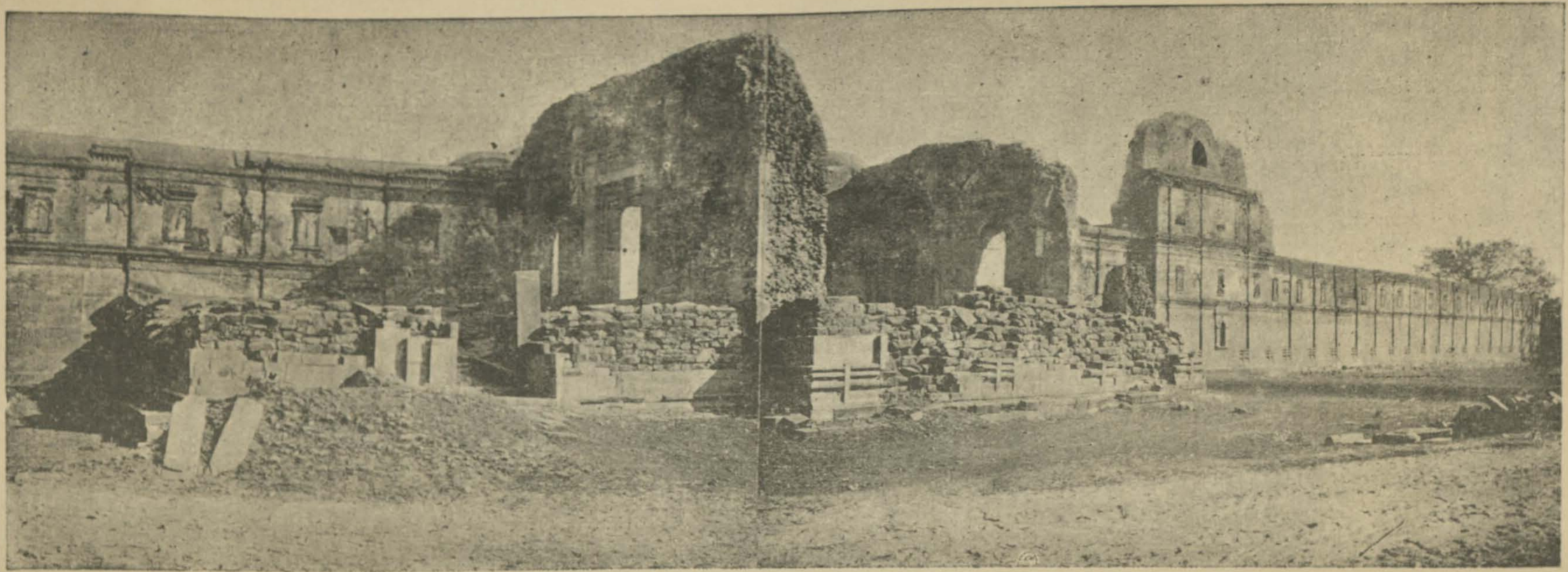


9. Chhota Pandua. Pulpit in Bari Masjid



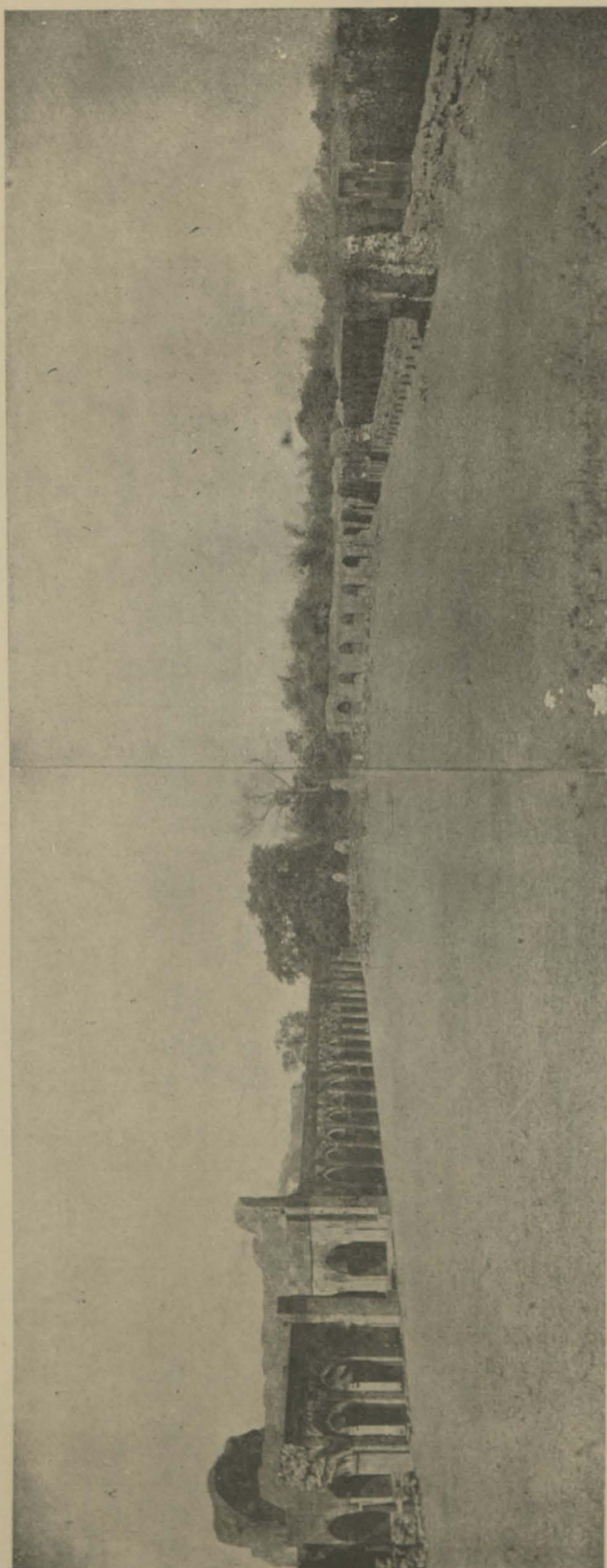
10. Chhota Pandua. Minar (Cir. 1300)

Plate V



11. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the western face showing the ruins of Sikandar Shah's tomb (1375)

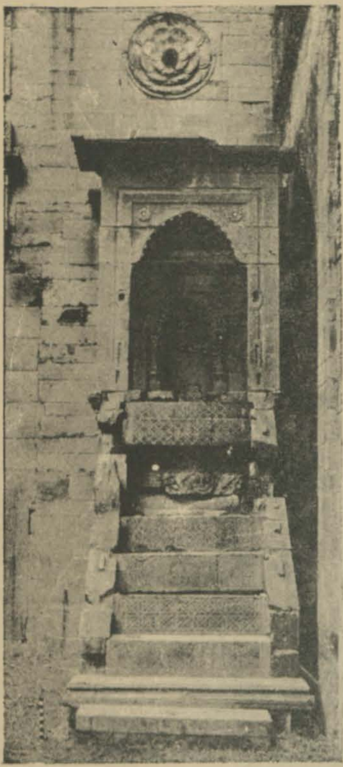
Plate VI



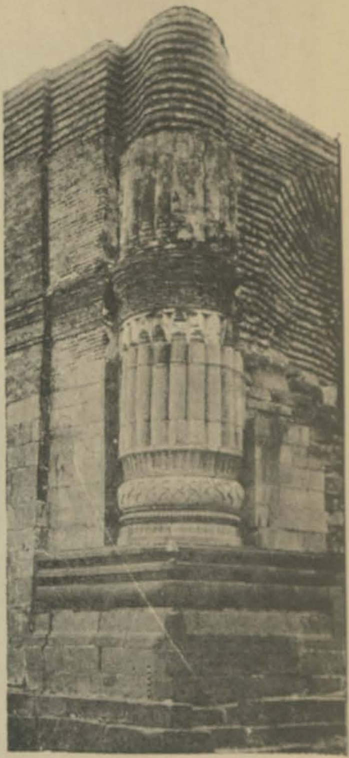
12. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the interior screen of arches



13. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the Central nave on the western side



14. Hazrat Pandua. Pulpit in Adina Masjid



15. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the Corner Tower



16. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the Ladies' Gallery ("Badshah ka takht")

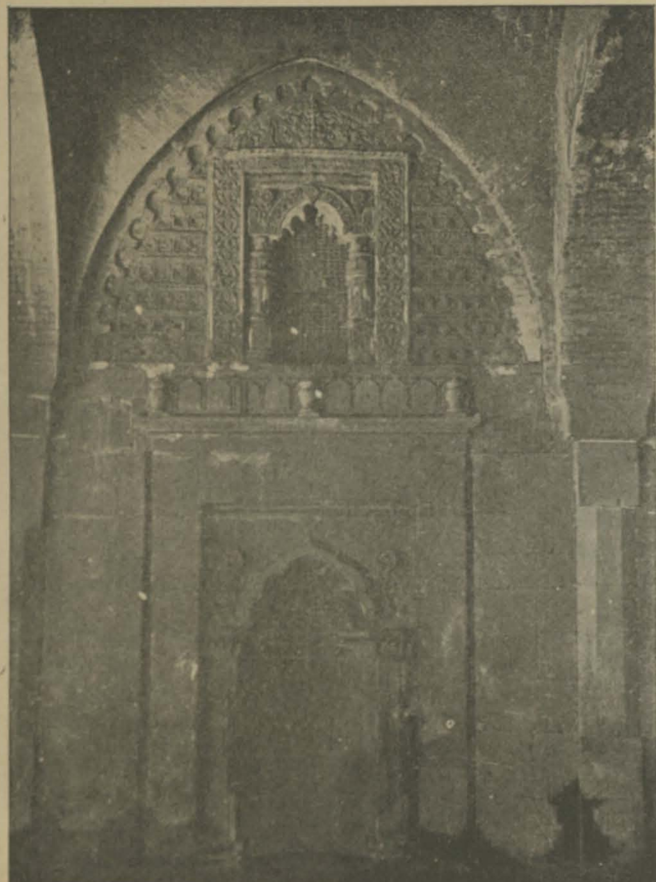


17. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the flying damsel

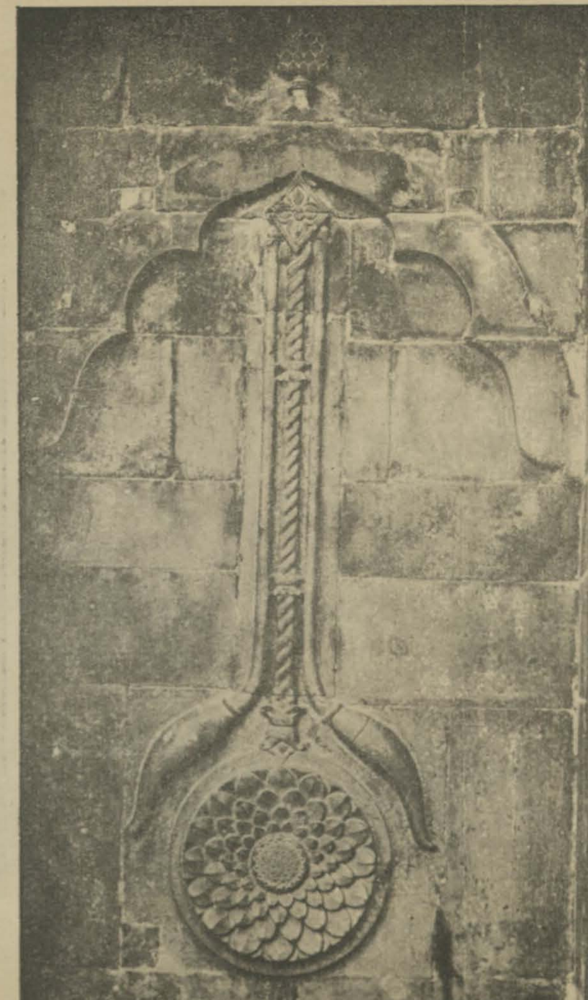


18. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the Hindu carved door

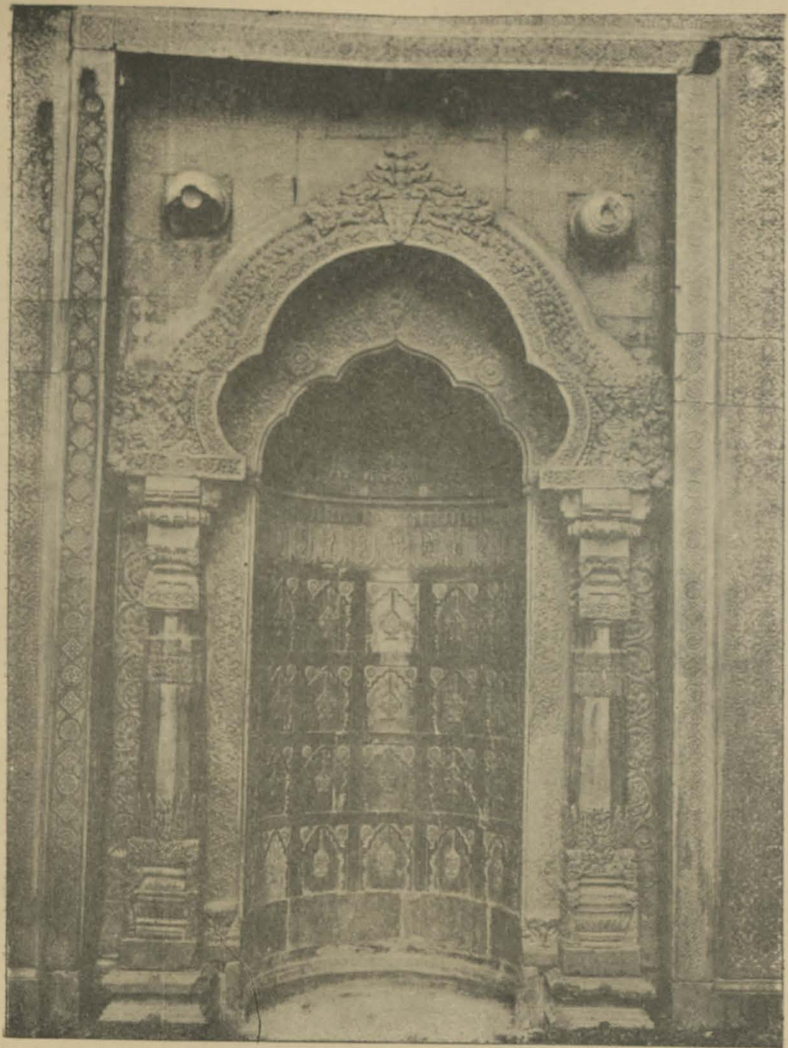
Plate X



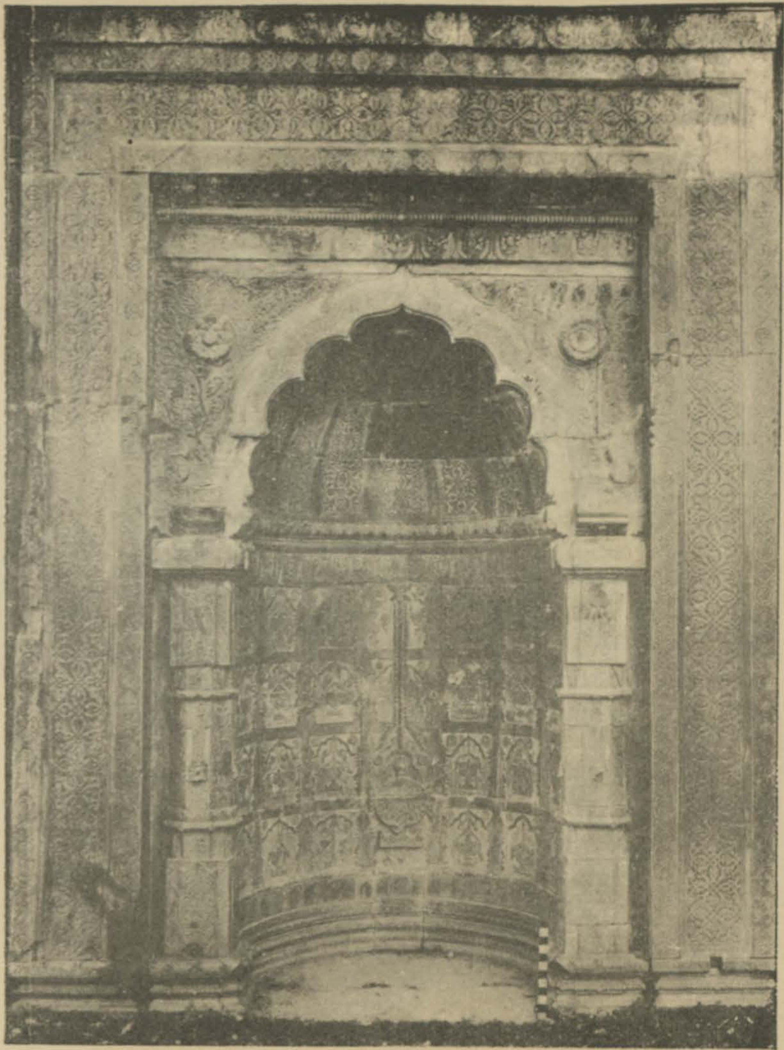
19. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum



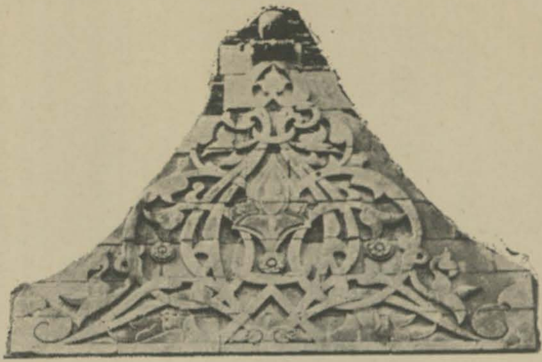
20. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, hanging motif



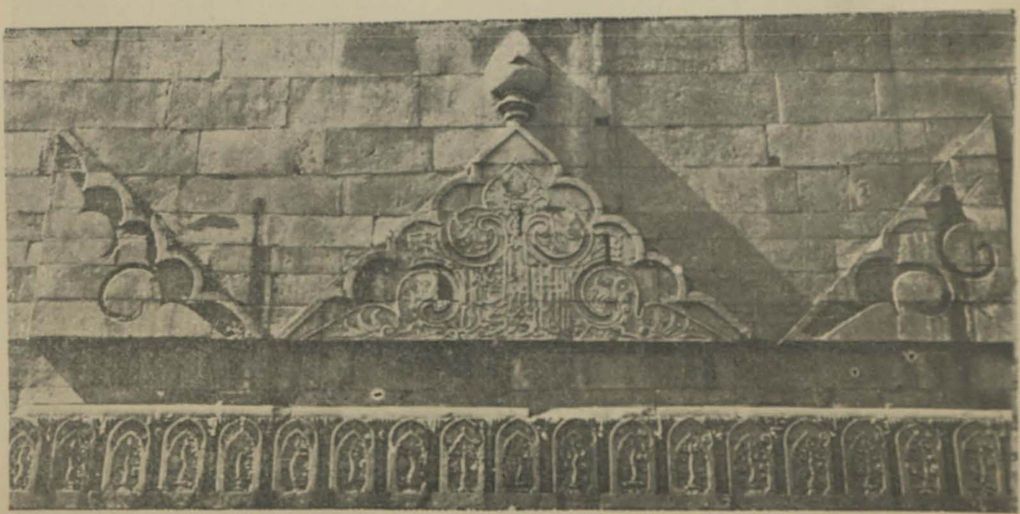
21. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, decorated mihrab with the Hindu outer frame



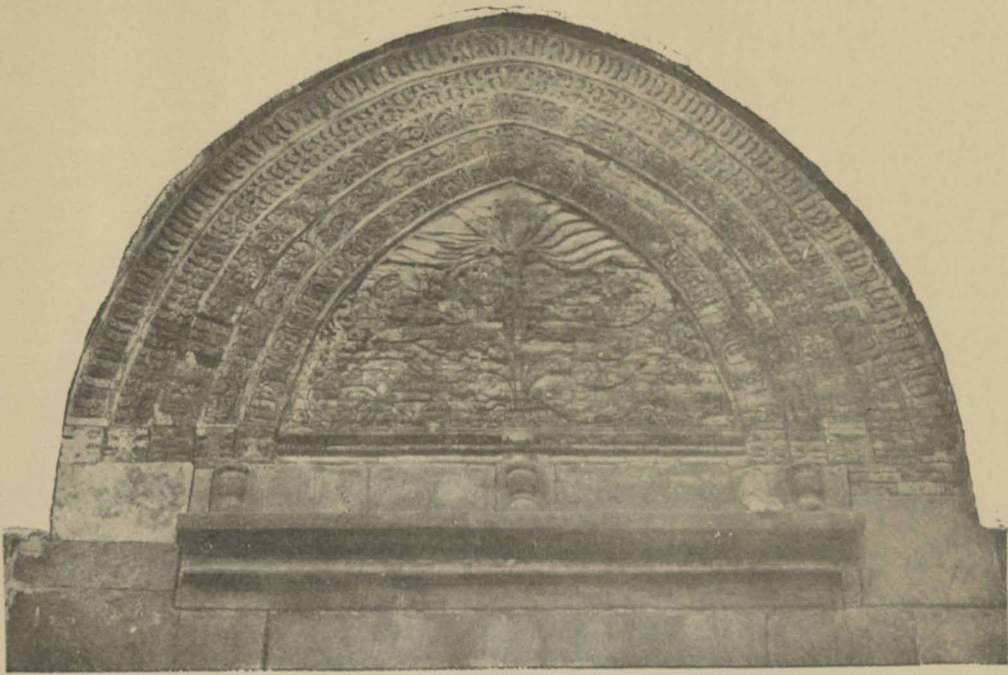
22. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, decorated mihrab in the typical Muslim style



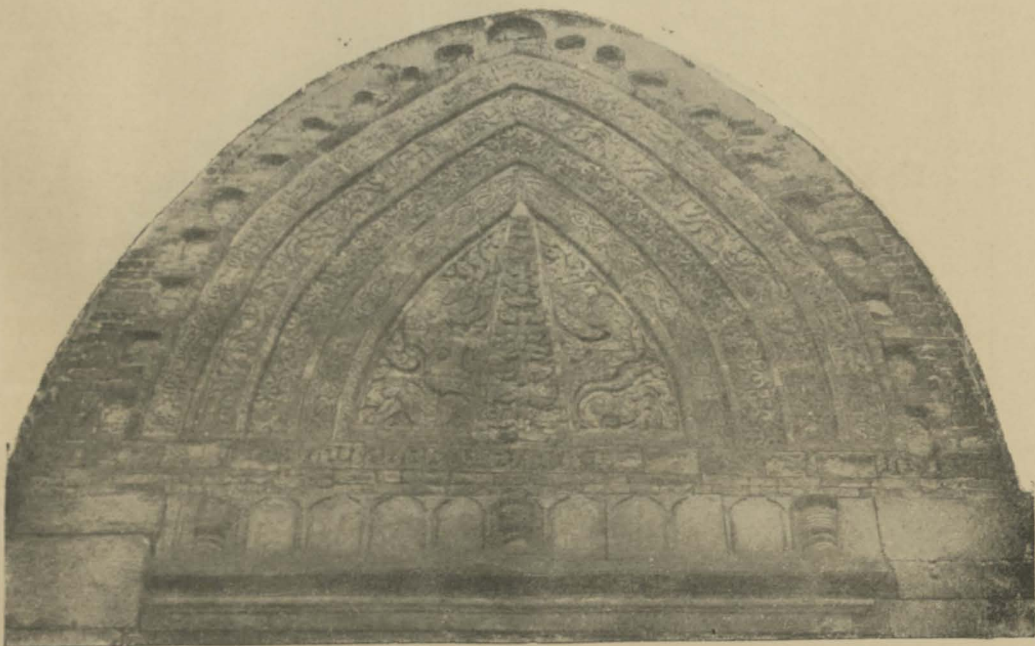
23. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the interlocking design



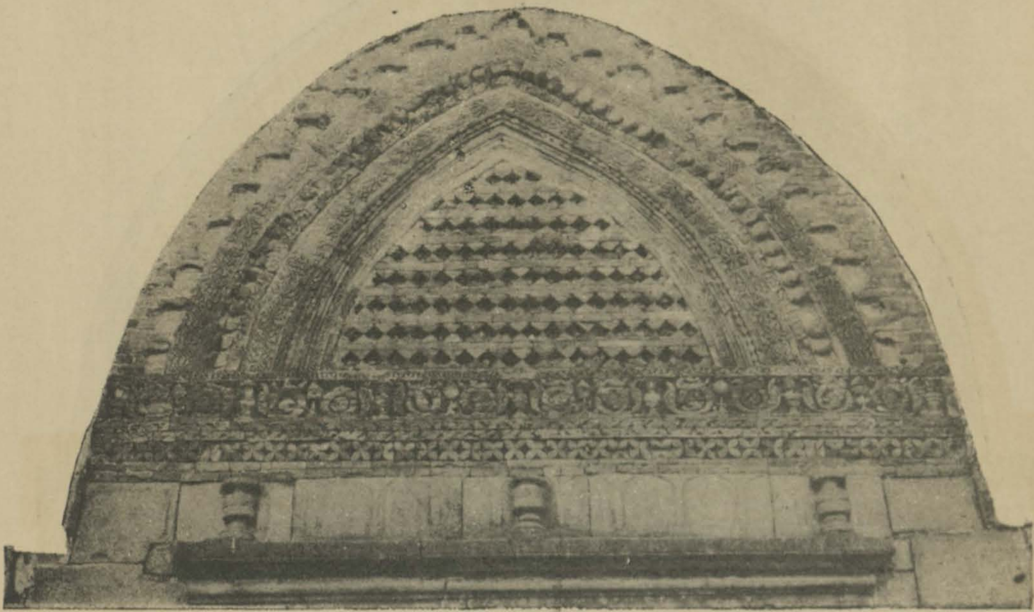
24. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the frieze over the central mihrab



25. Hazrat Paṇdua, Aḍinạ Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum



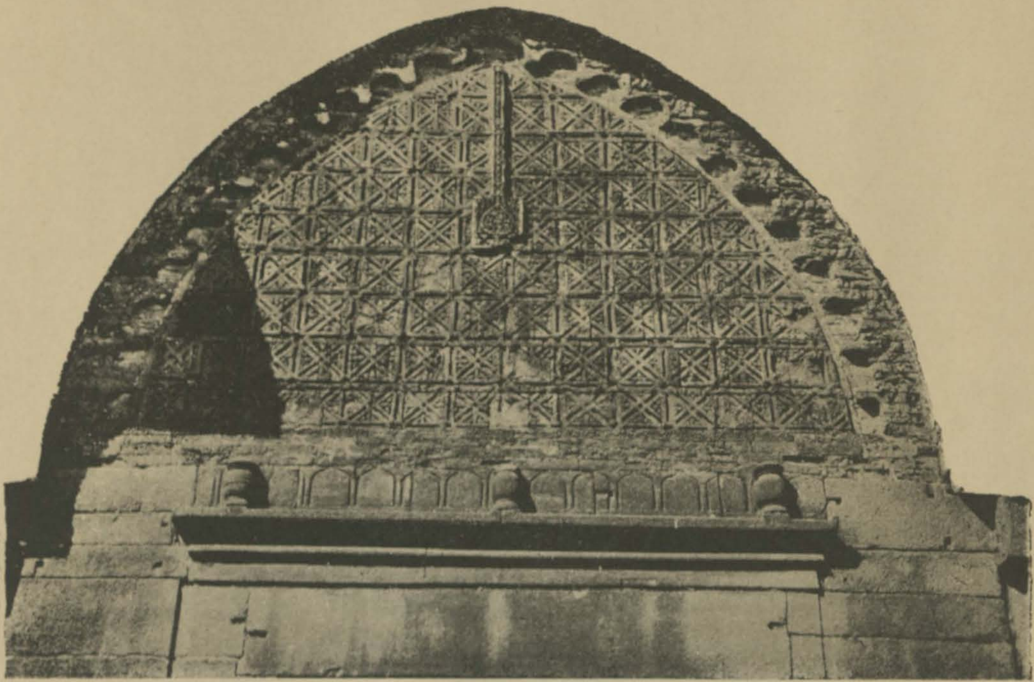
26. Hazrat Pandua, Adina Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum



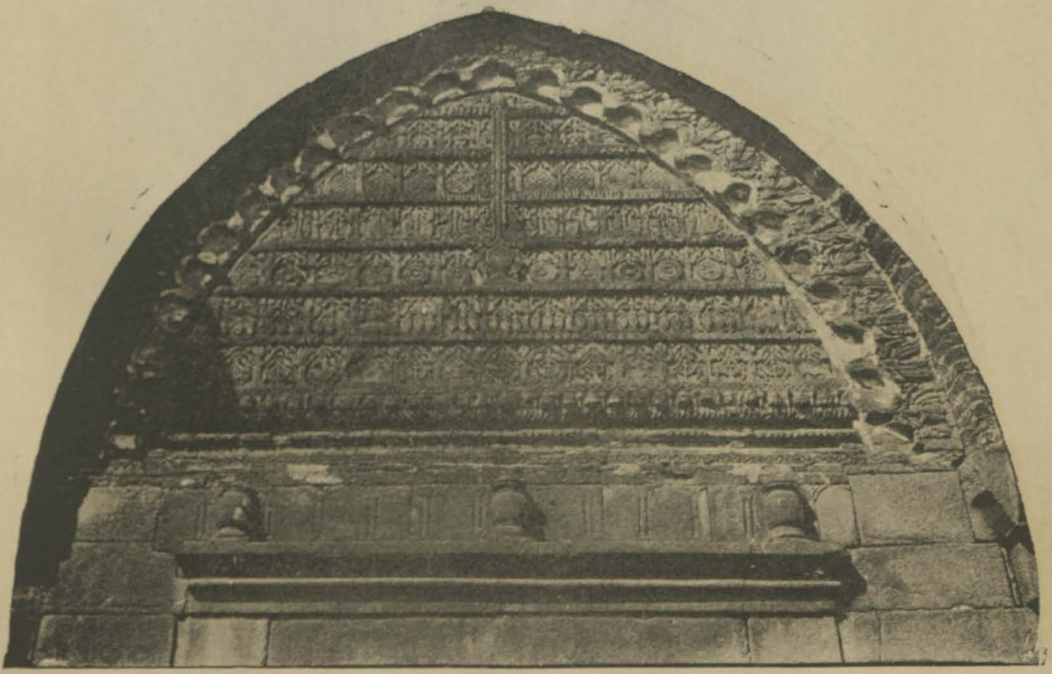
27. Ḥazraṭ Paṇḍua, Aḍina Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum



28. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum



29. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum

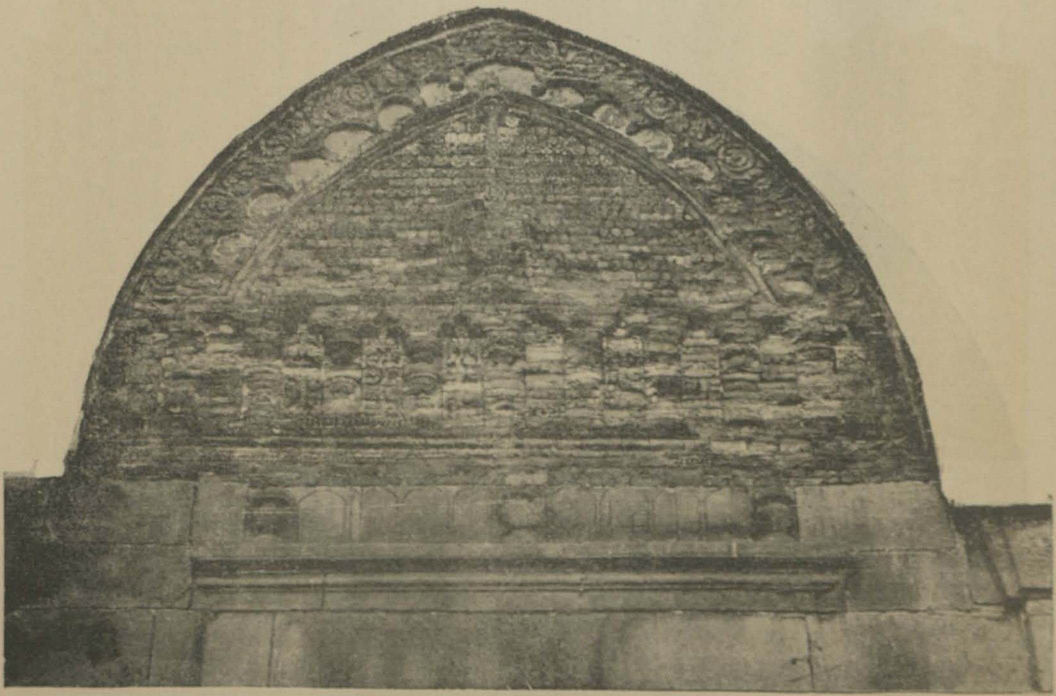


30. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum

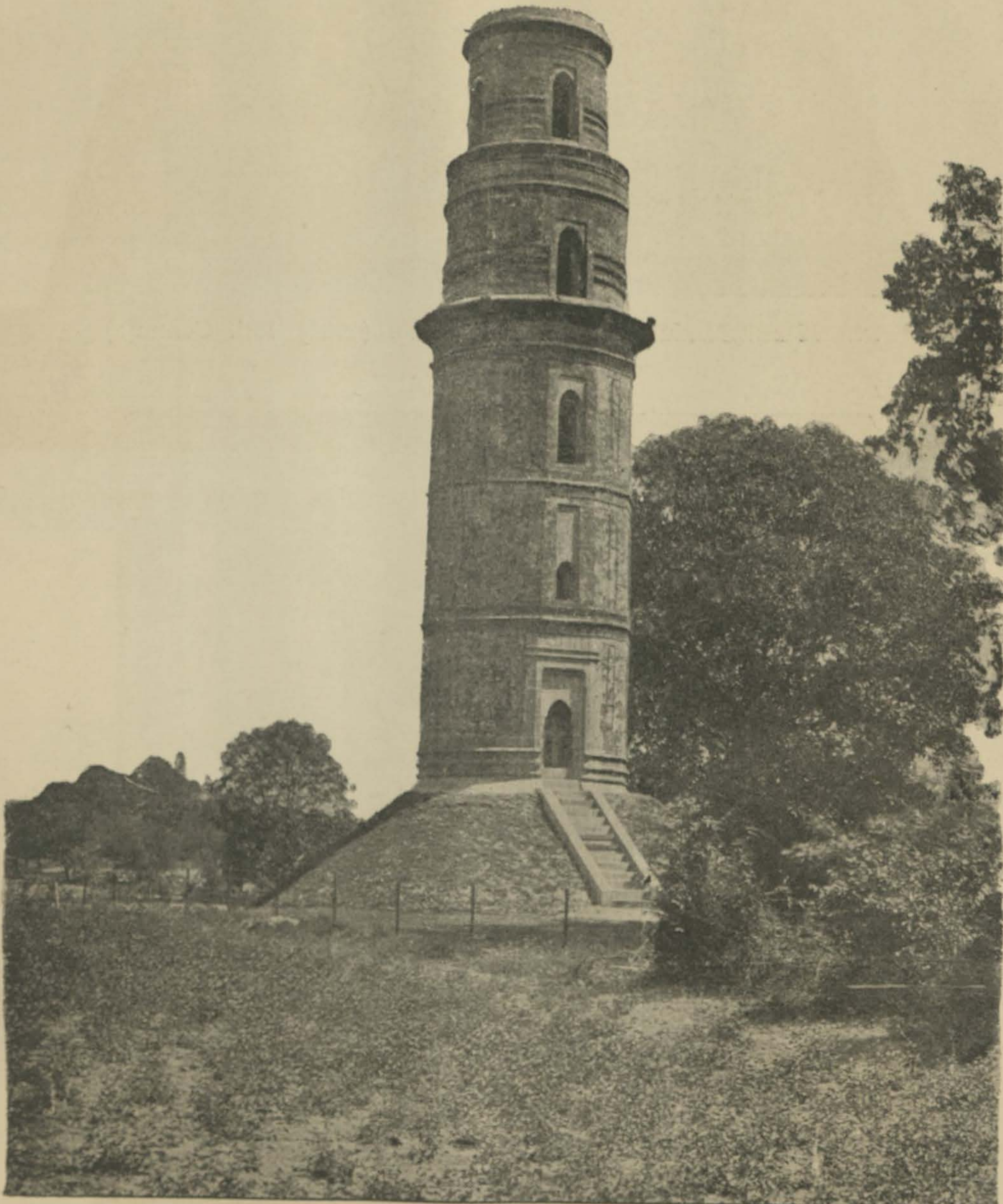
Plate XVI



31. Hazrat Pandua. Adina Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum

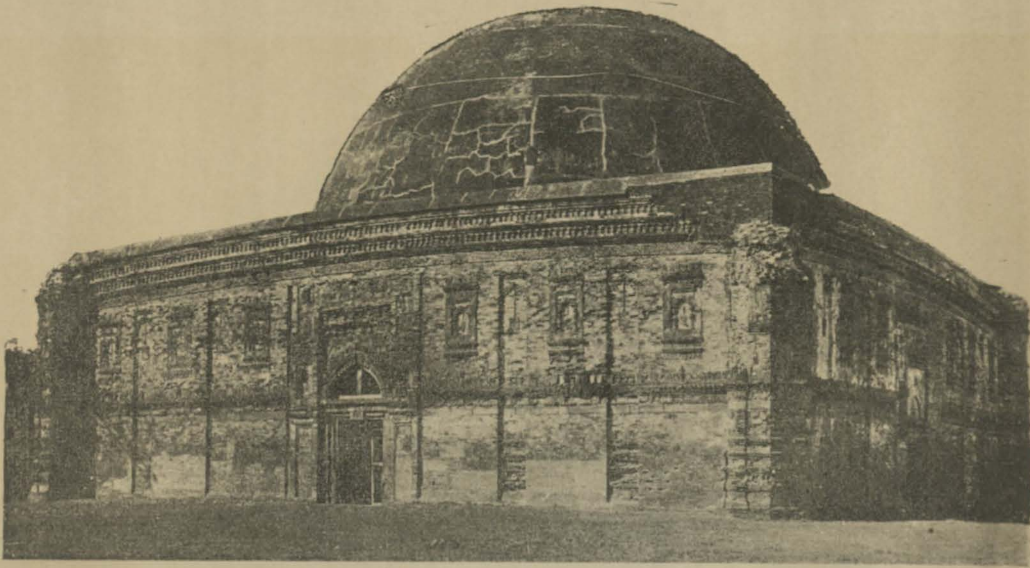


32. Hazrat Pandua, Adina Masjid, the brick design in the tympanum

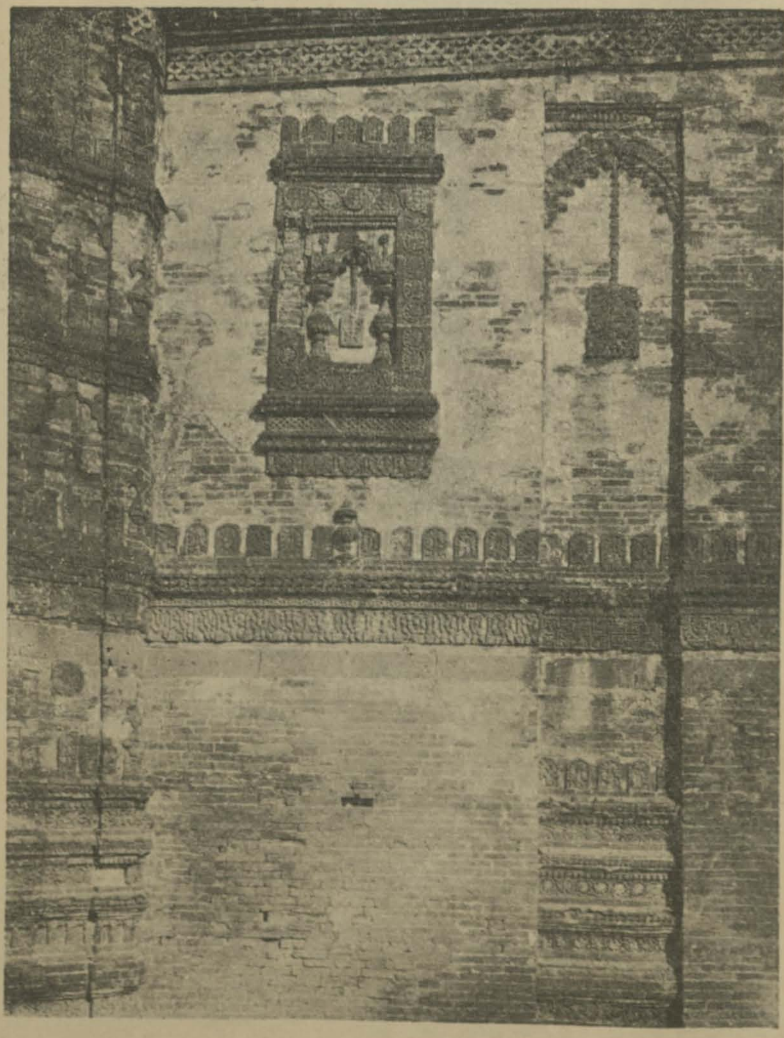


33. Gaur. Firoza Minar (Cir. 1490)

Plate XVIII



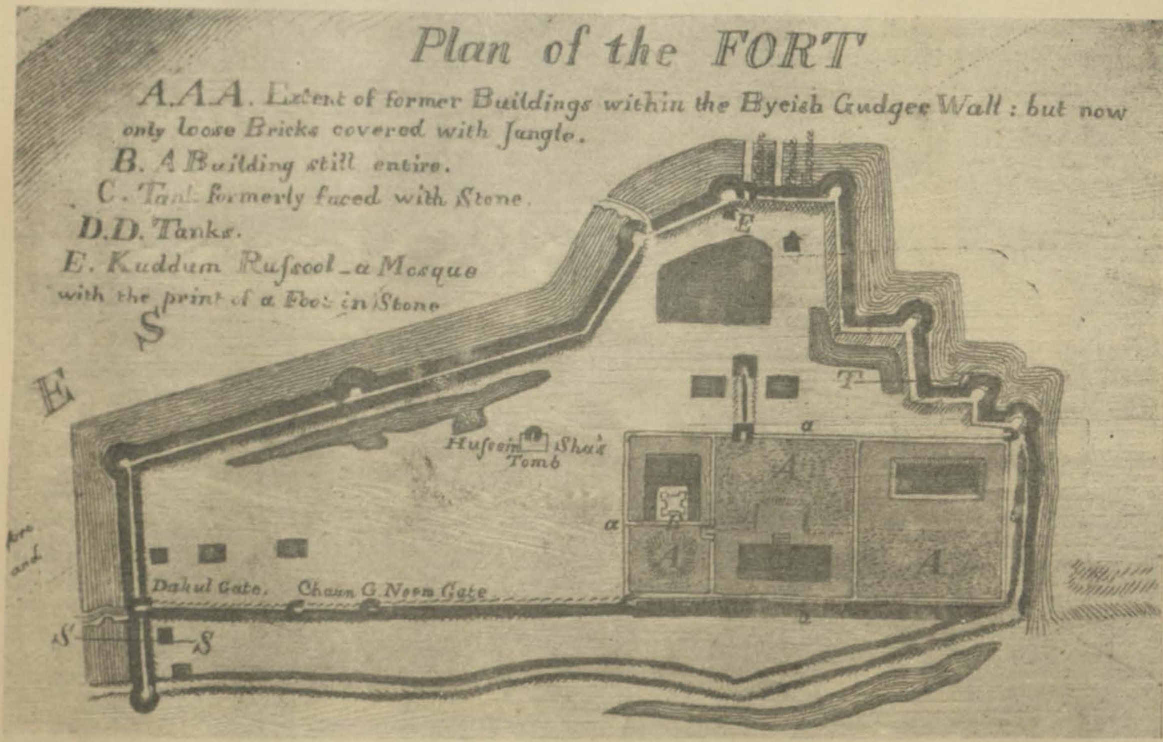
34. Hazrat Pandua. Eklakhi Mausoleum (early 15th Century)



35. Hazrat Pandua. Eklakhi Mausoleum, detail of a panel



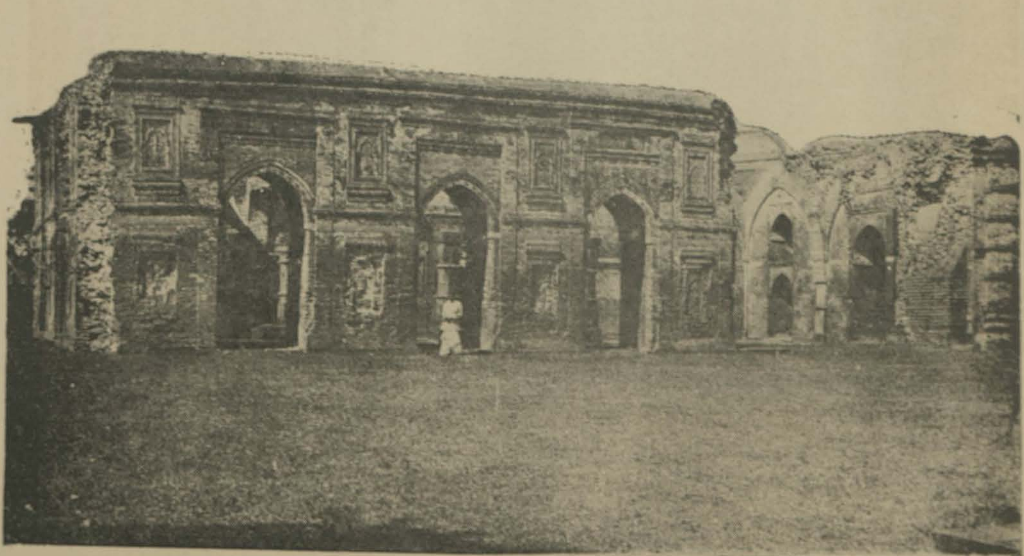
36. Gaur. Kotwali Gate after Creighton (mid. 15th Century)



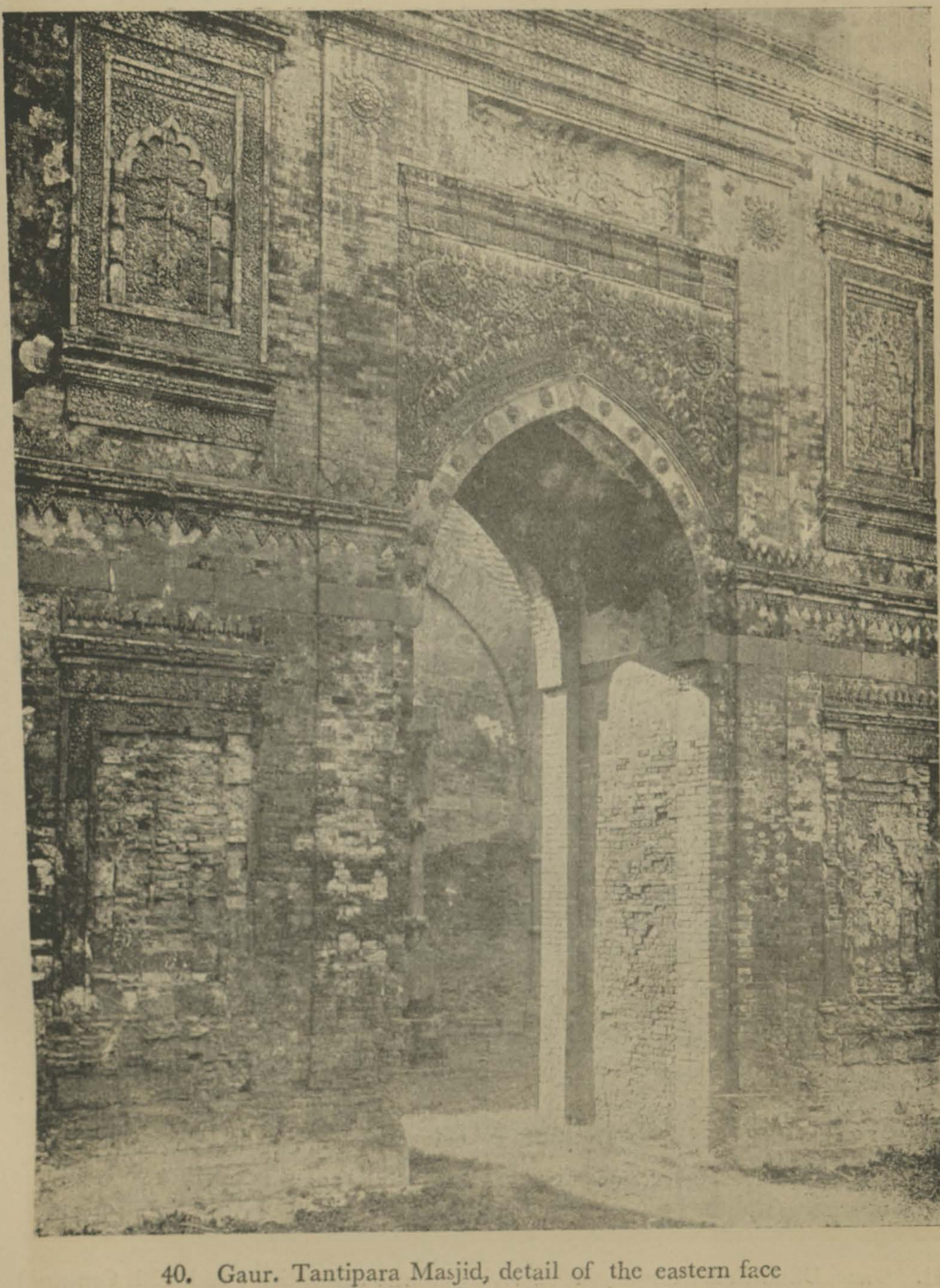
37. Gaur. Citadel after Creighton (mid. 15th Century)



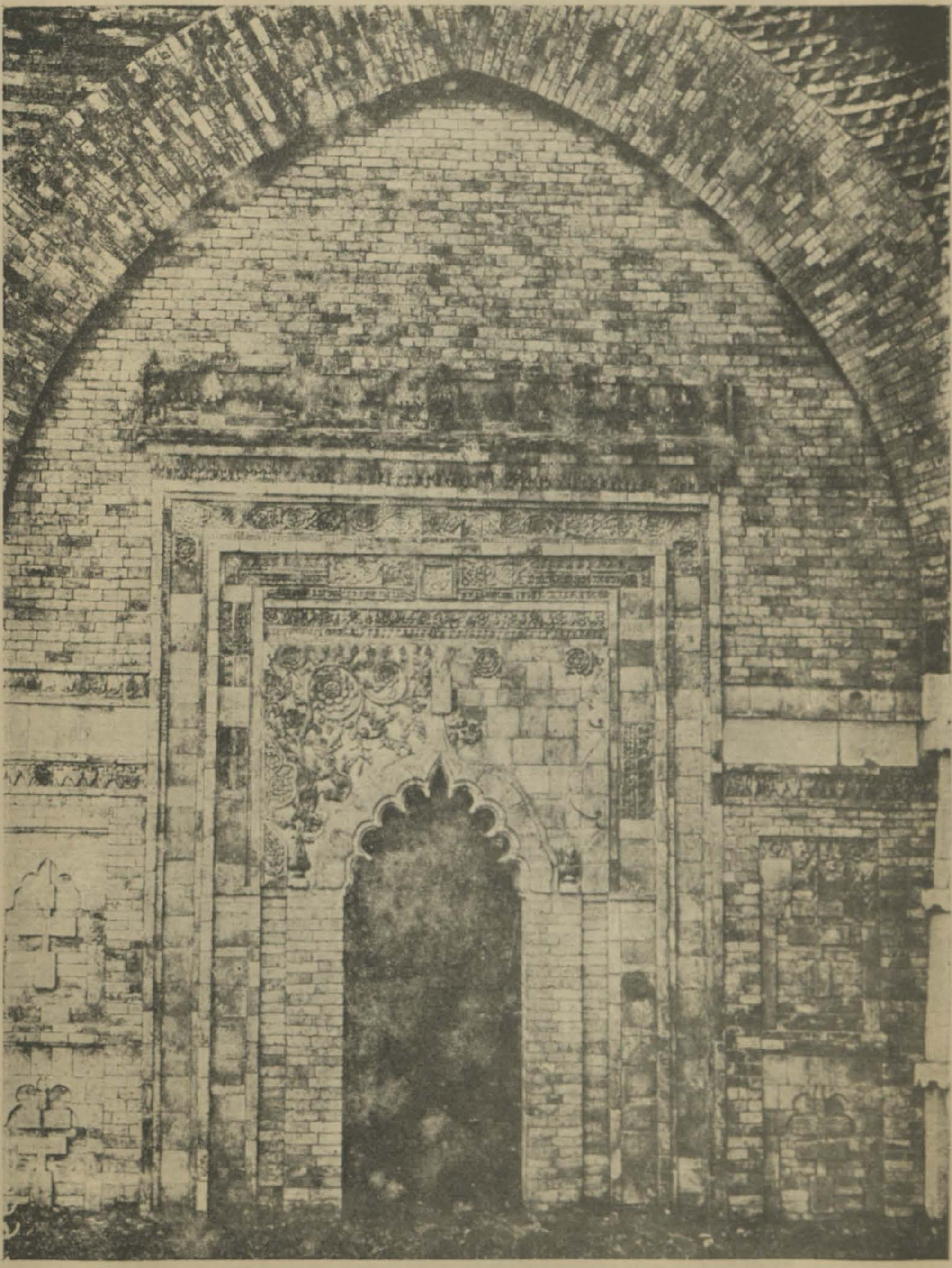
38. Gaur. Dakhil Darwaza (mid. 15th Century)



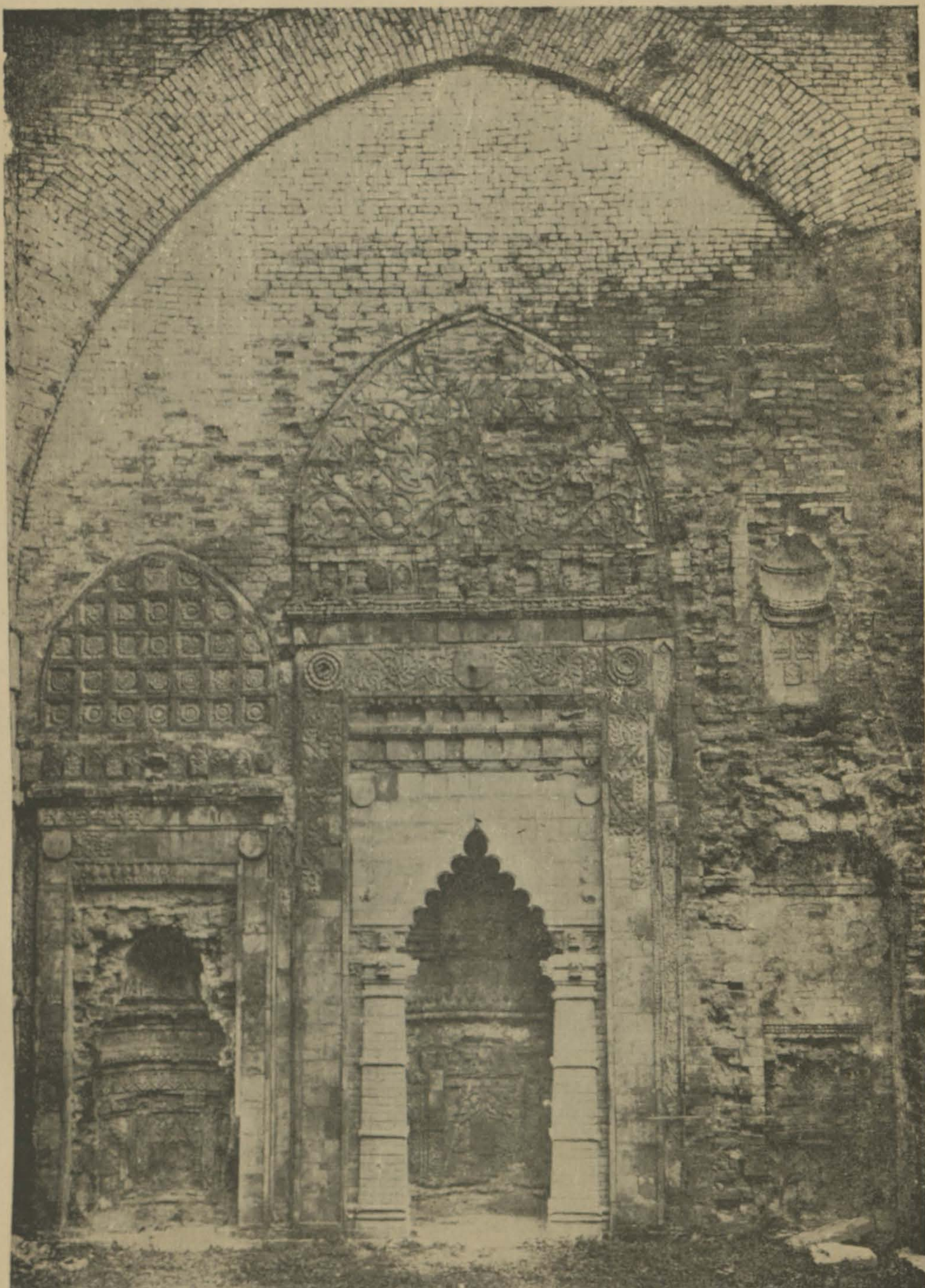
39. Gaur. Tantipara Masjid, eastern face (1480)



40. Gaur. Tantipara Masjid, detail of the eastern face

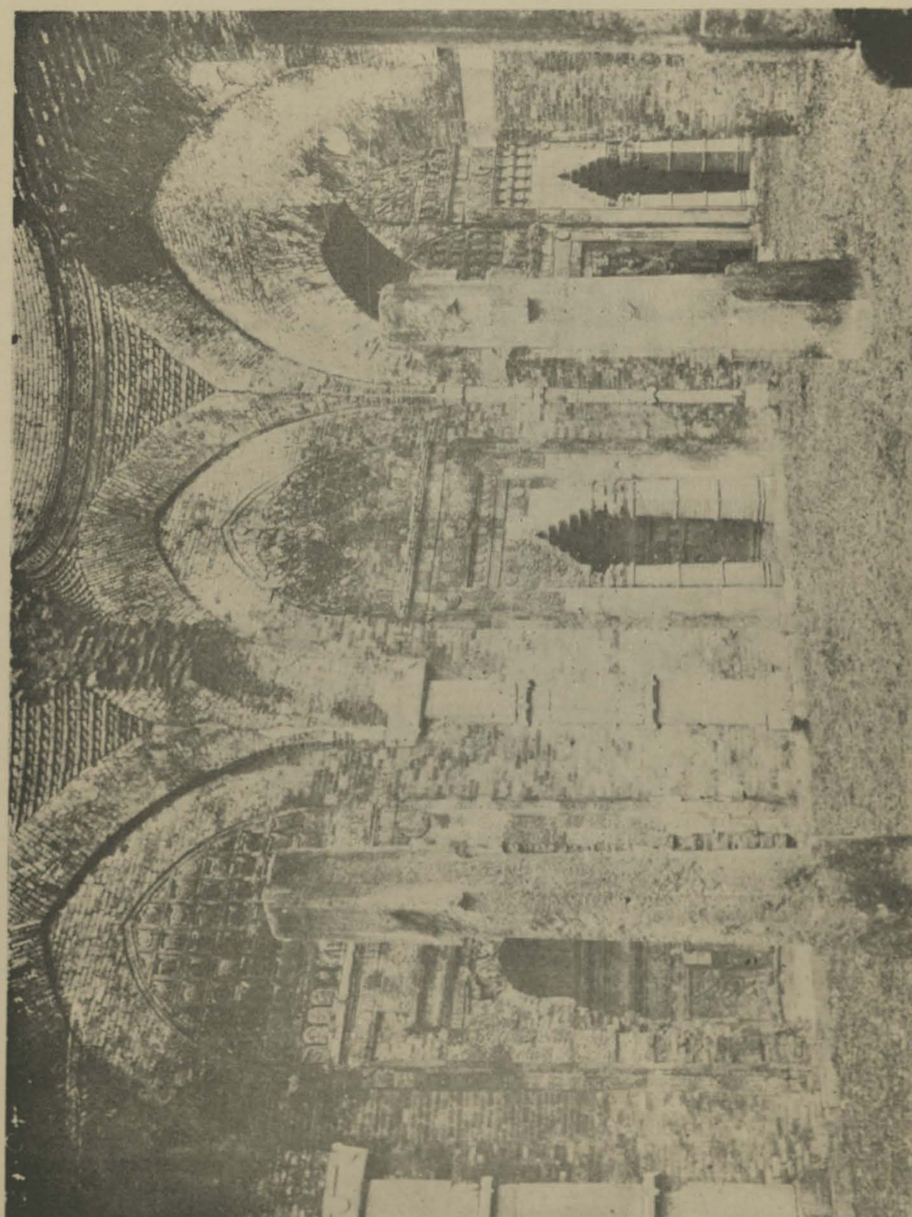


41. Gaur. Dhunichak Mosque, the surviving mihrab decoration (mid. 15th Century)



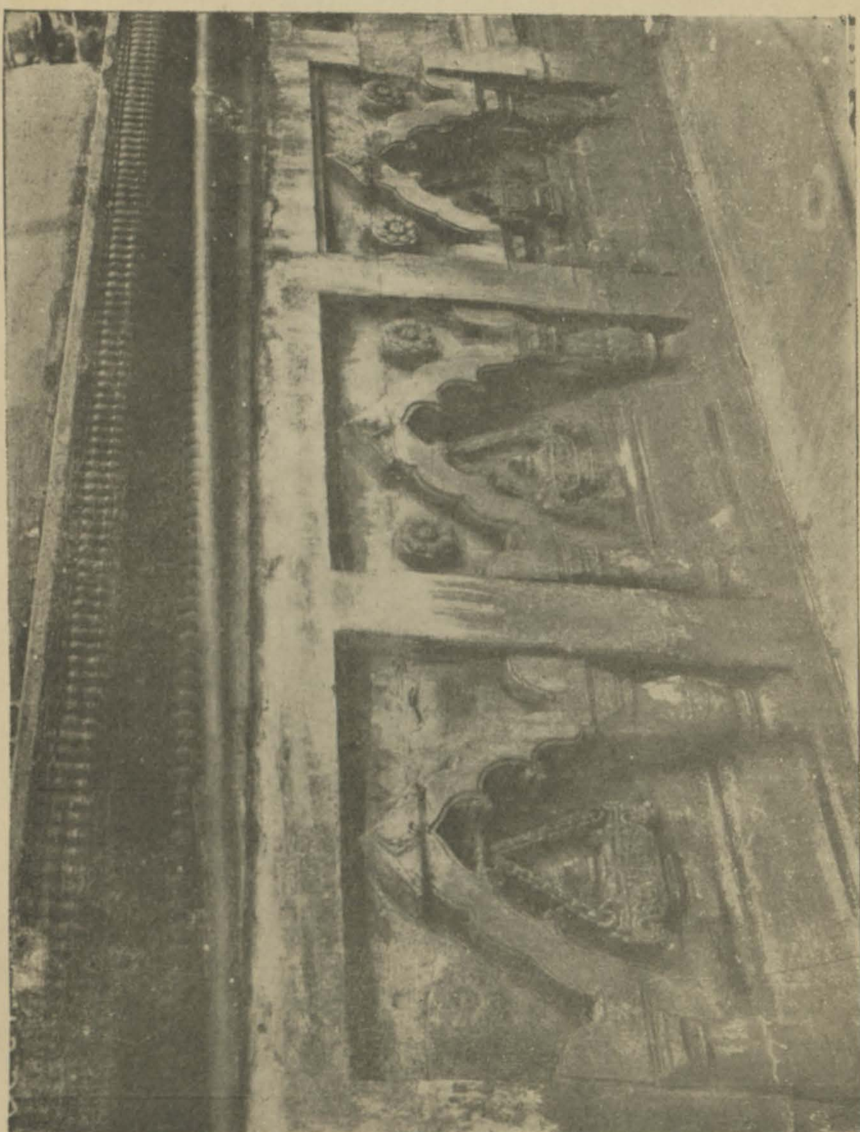
42. Gaur. Darasbari Mosque, the surviving mihrab decoration (1479)

Plate XXIV



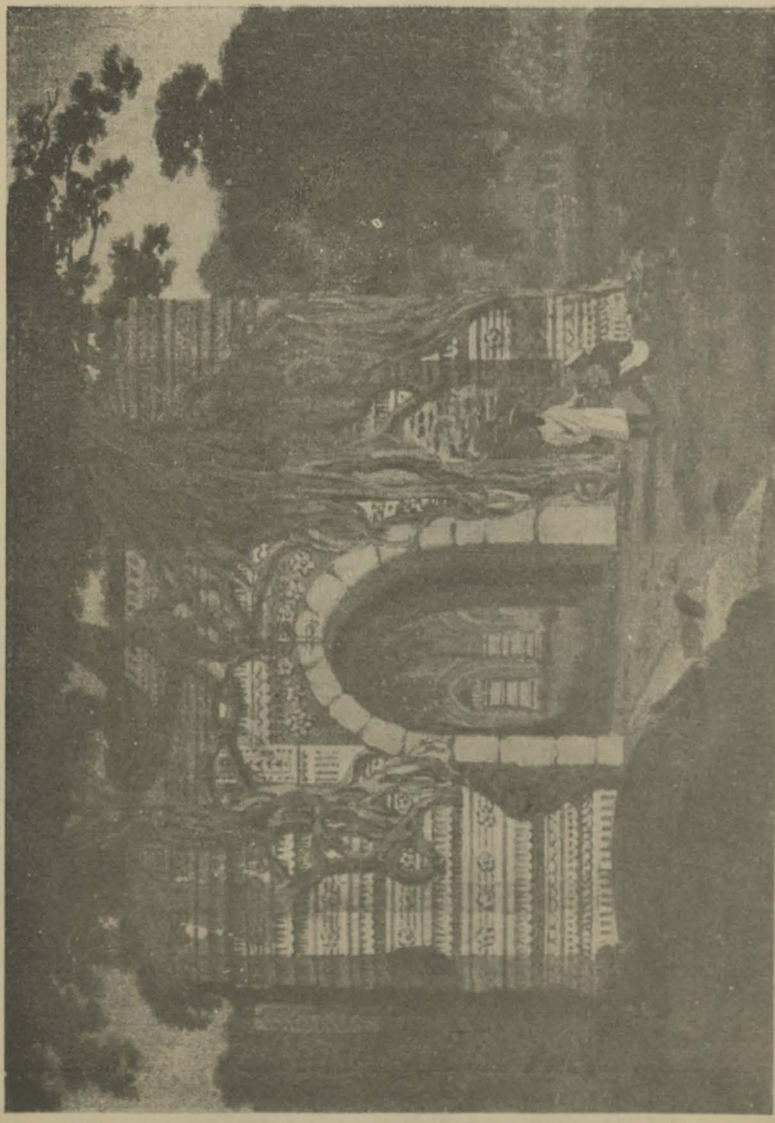
43. Gaur. Darasbari Mosque in ruins

Plate XXV



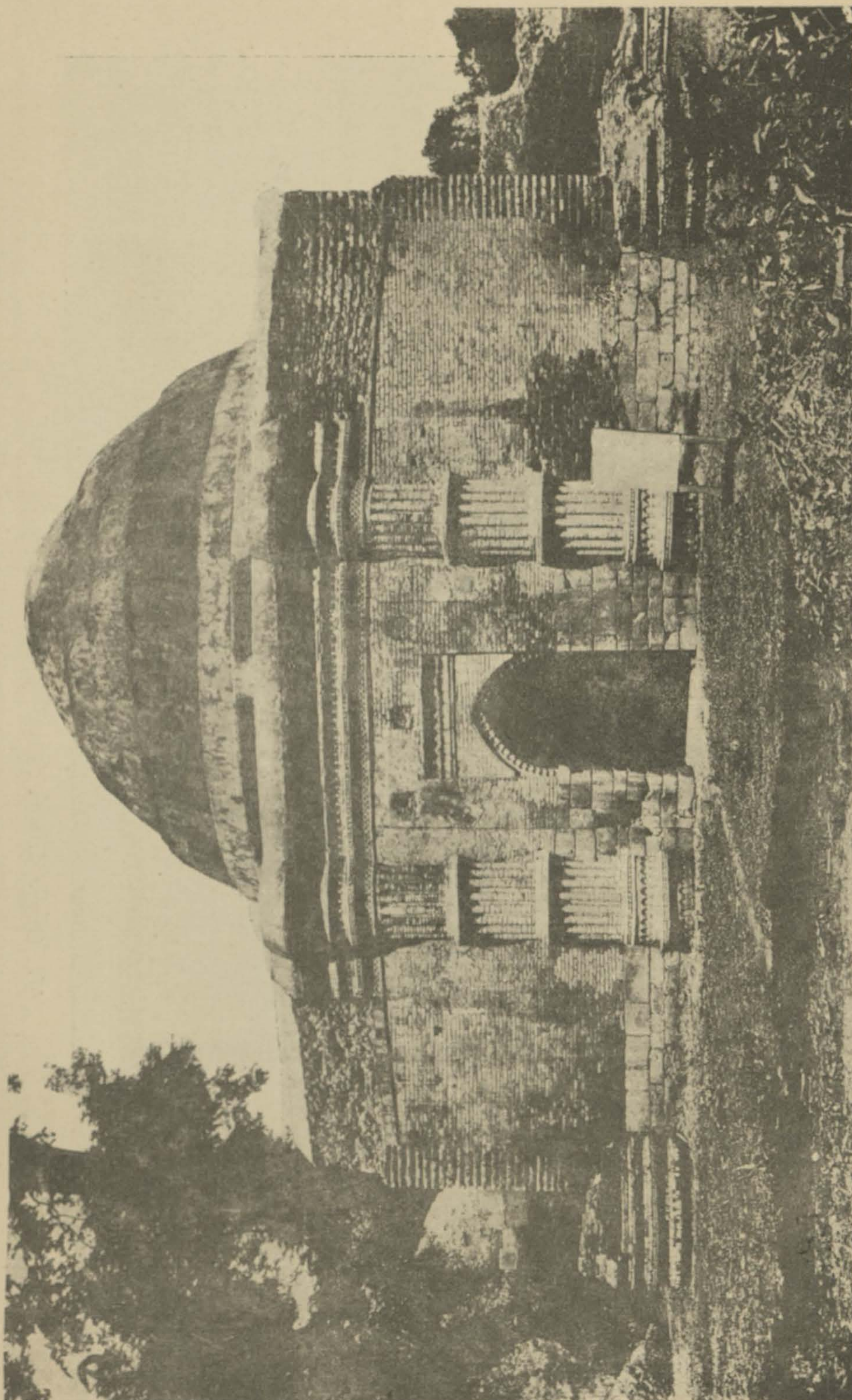
44. Sonargaon. Tomb of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah, Panel decoration (Cir. 1410)

Plate XXVI



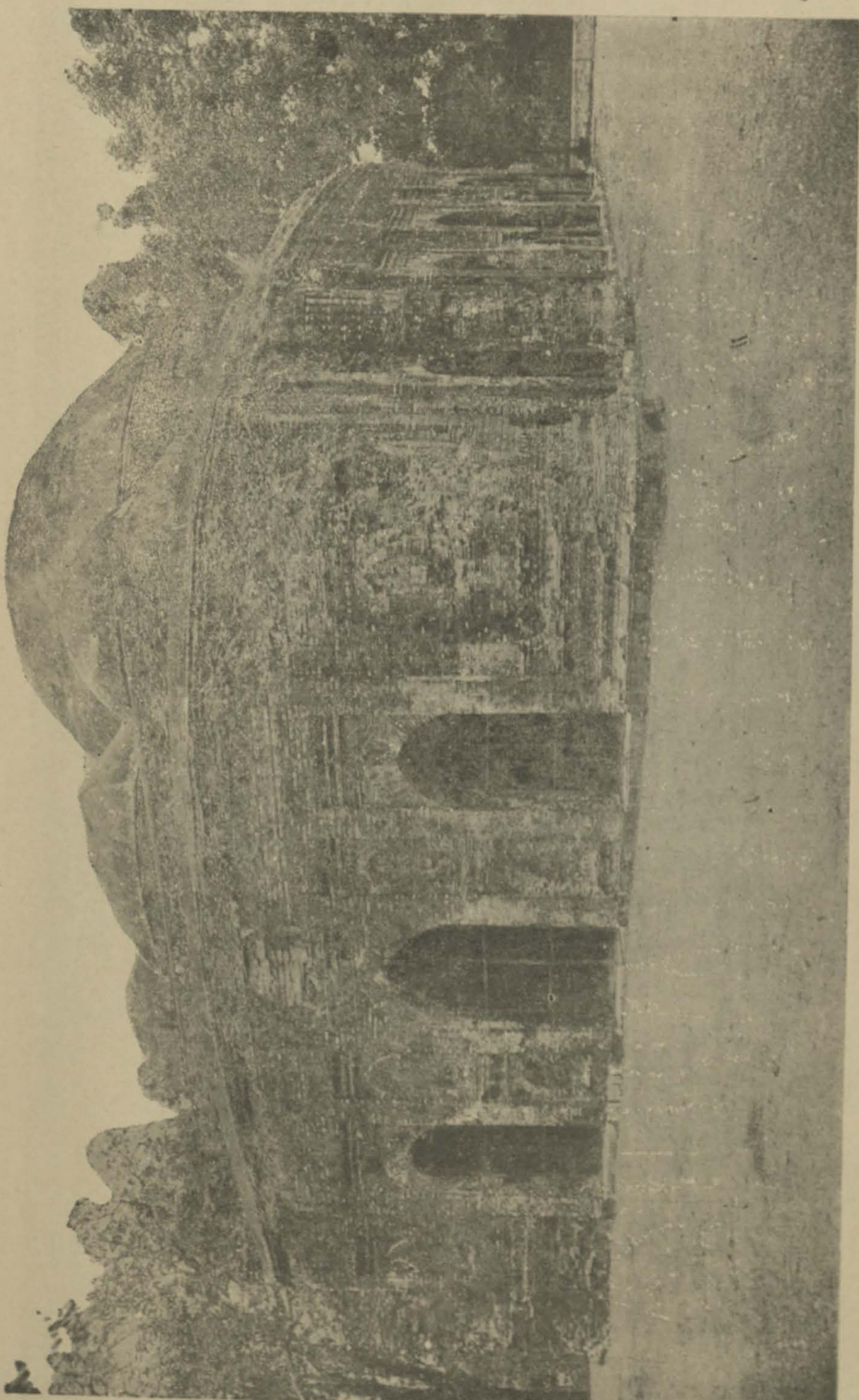
45. Gaur. Gate at the tomb of Alauddin Husain Shah, after Creighton (Cir. 1519)

Plate XXVII



46. Gaur. Gumti Gate (1512)

Plate XXVIII

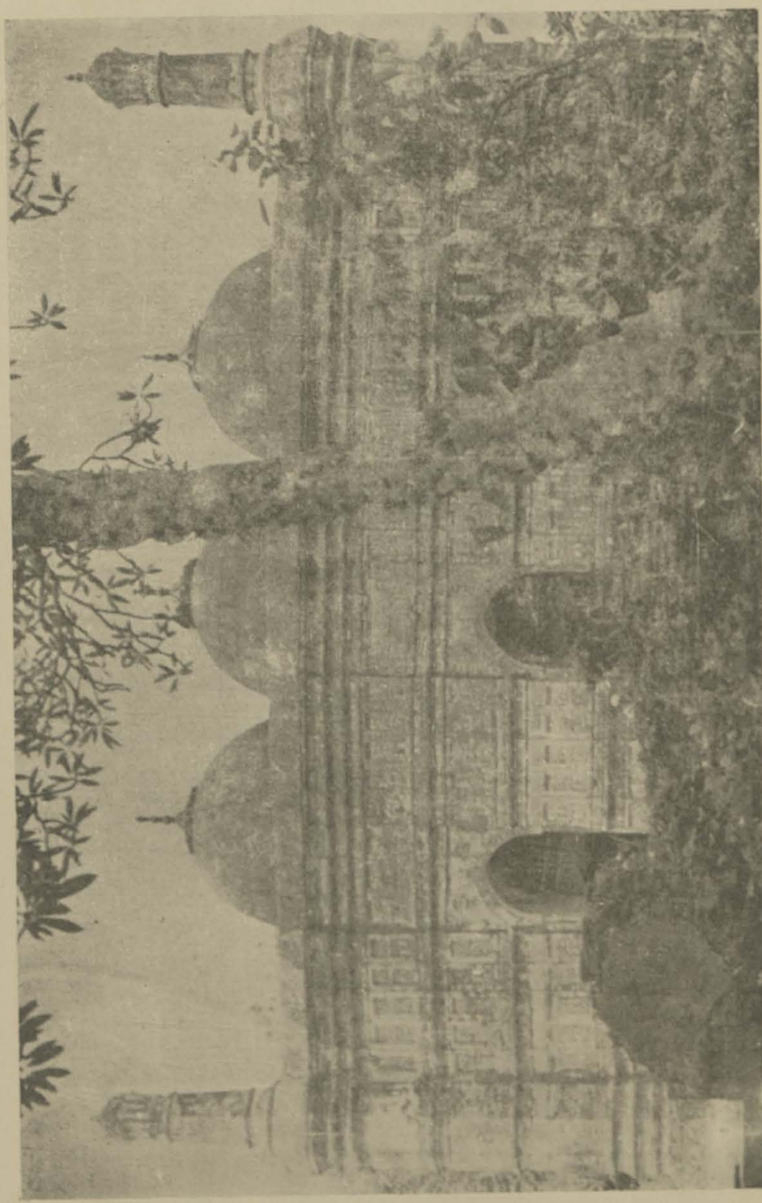


47. Gaur. Lattan Masjid (early 16th Century)

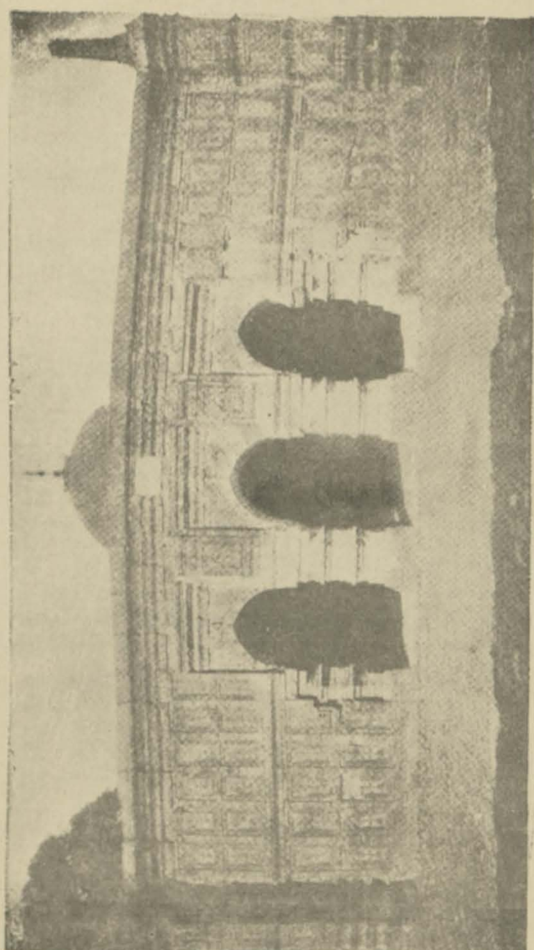


48. Gaur. Lattan Masjid, the decorated pendentives

Plate XXX

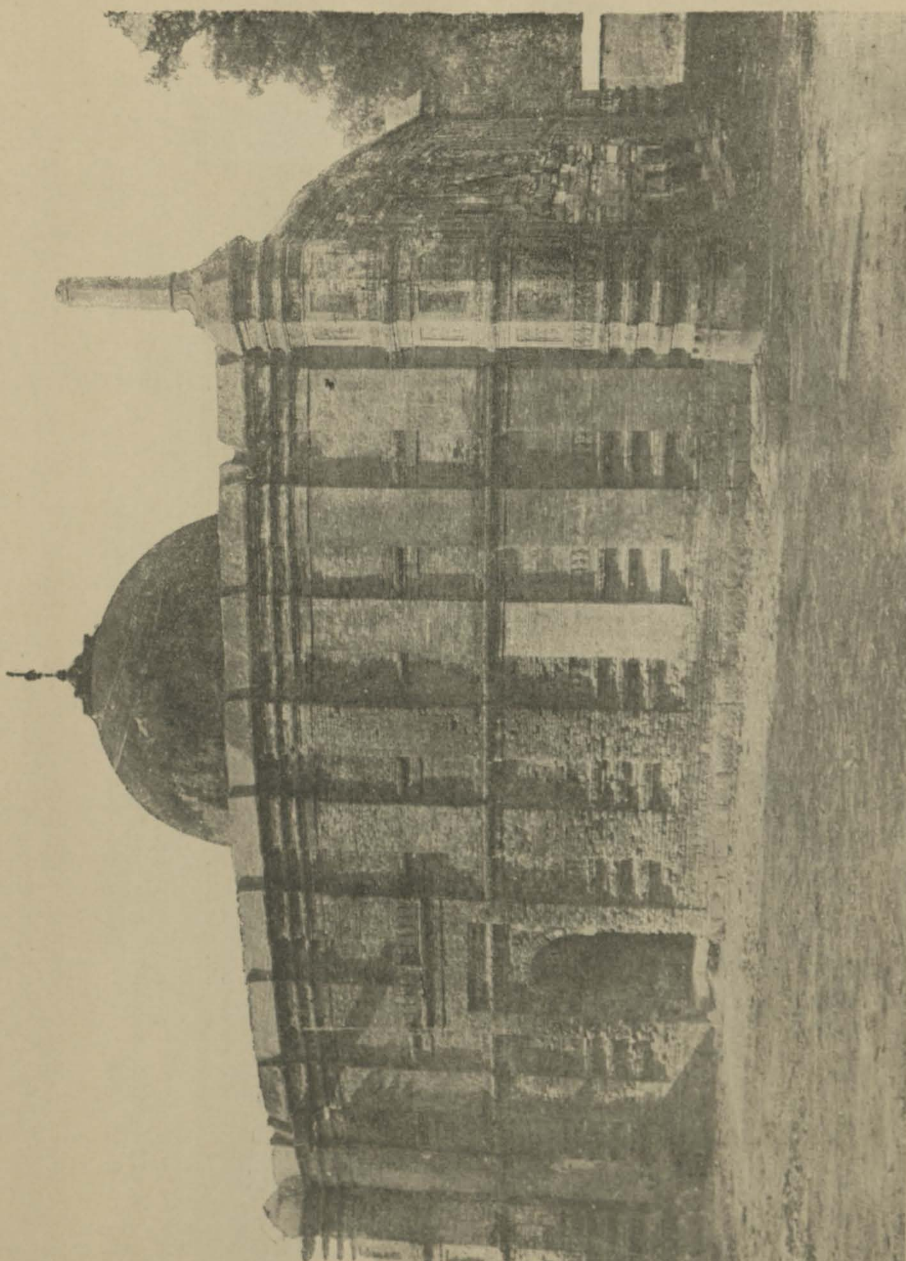


49. Gaur. Jahaniyan Masjid (1535)



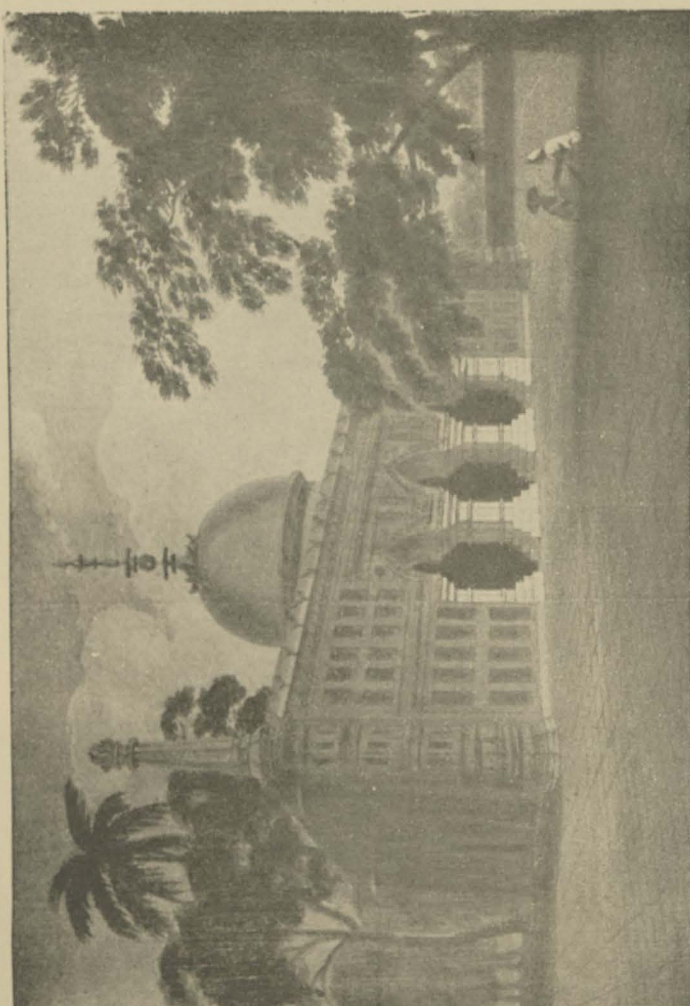
50. Gaur. Qadam Rasul, the eastern facade (1531)

Plate XXXII

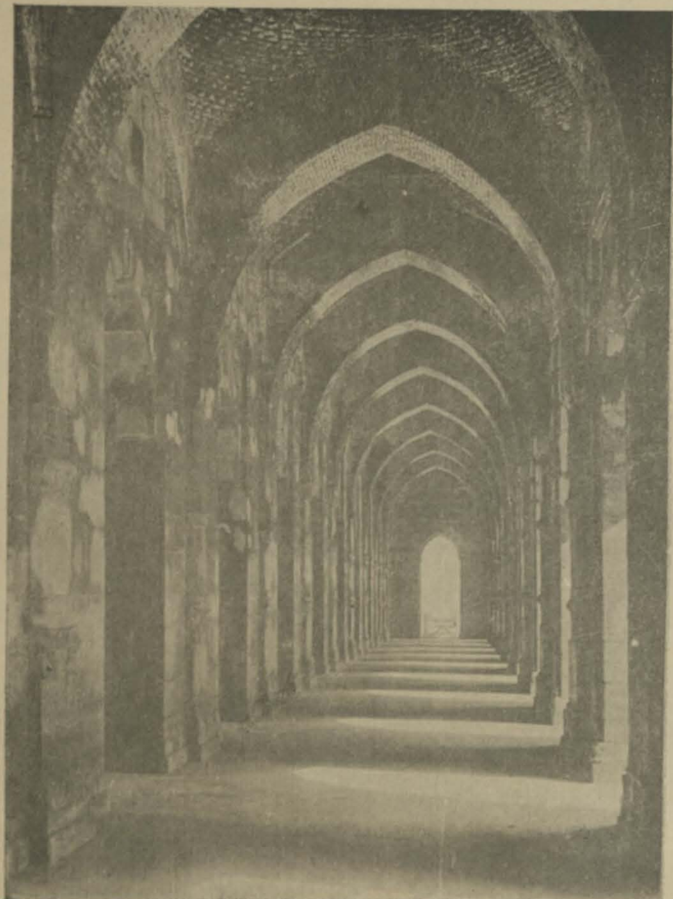


51. Gaur. Qadam Rasul, the southern face (1531)

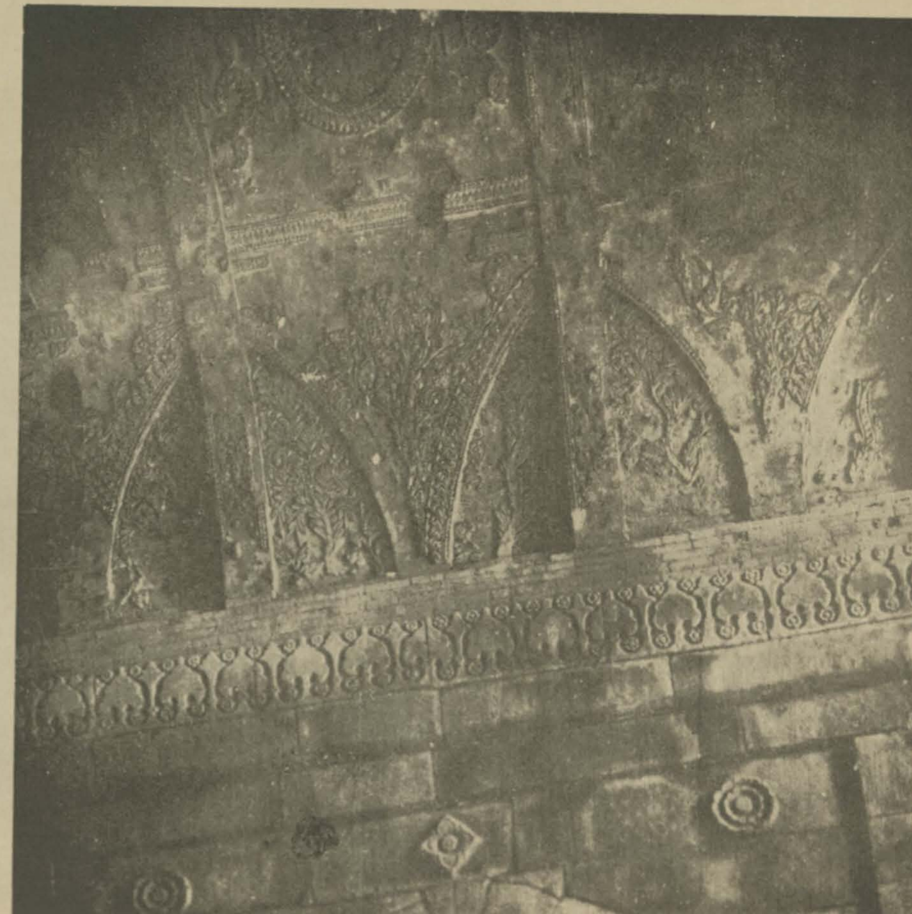
Plate XXXIII



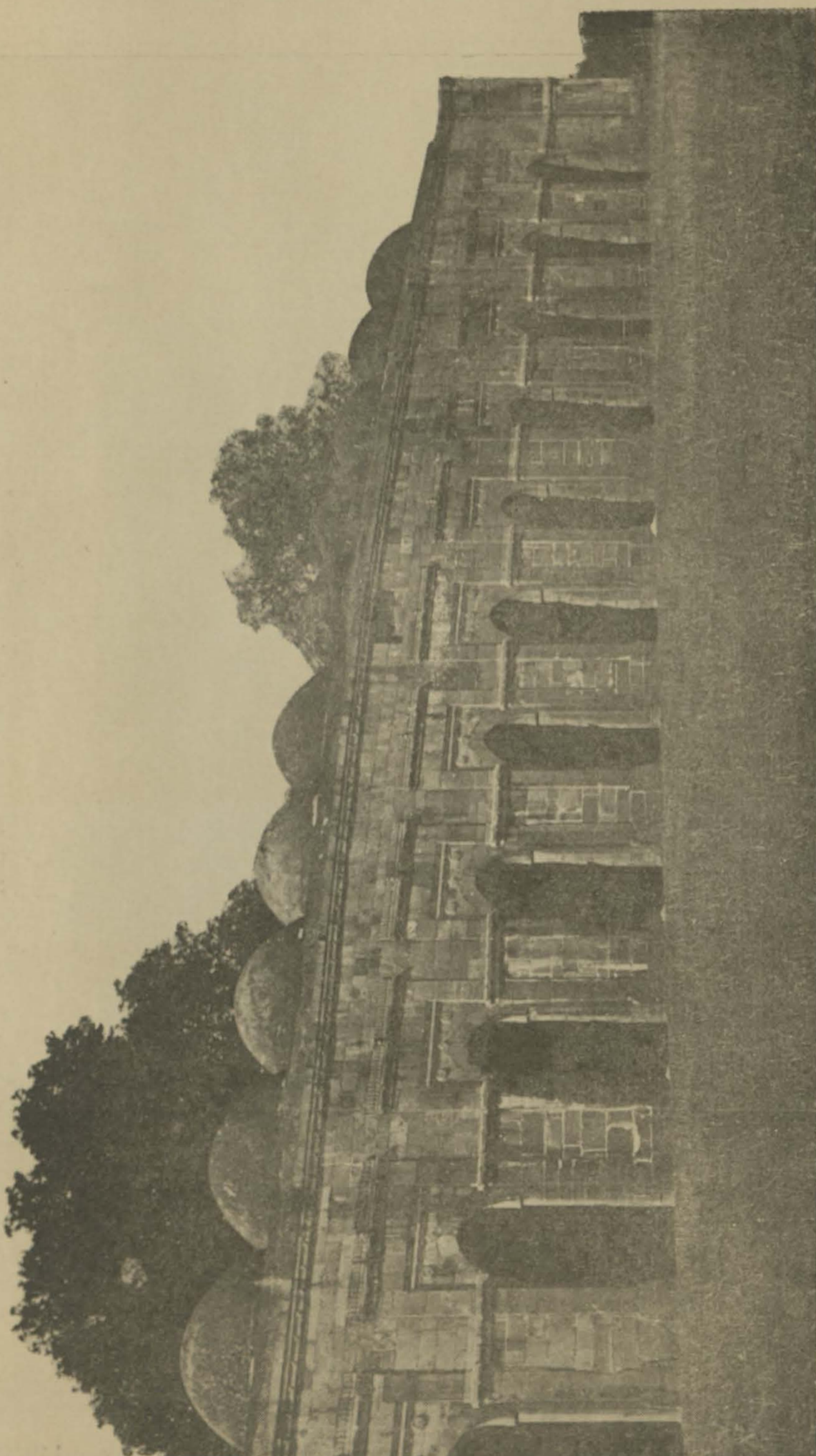
52. Gaur. Qadam Rasul (after Creighton)



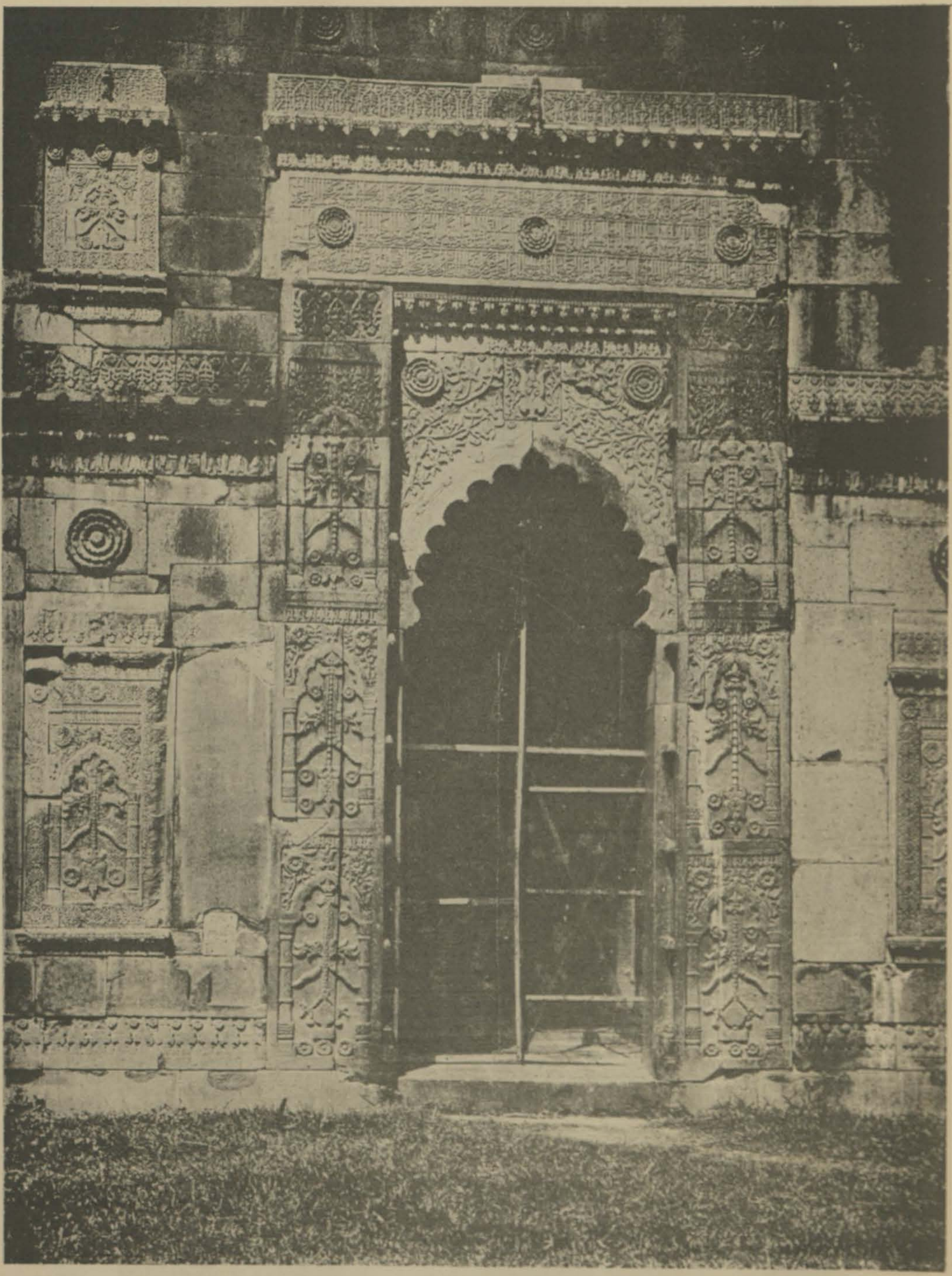
53. Gaur. Bara Sona Masjid, the interior (1526)



54. Gaur. Gunmant Masjid, the decorated ceiling (early 16th century)



55. Gaur. Bara Sona Masjid, the eastern face (1526)

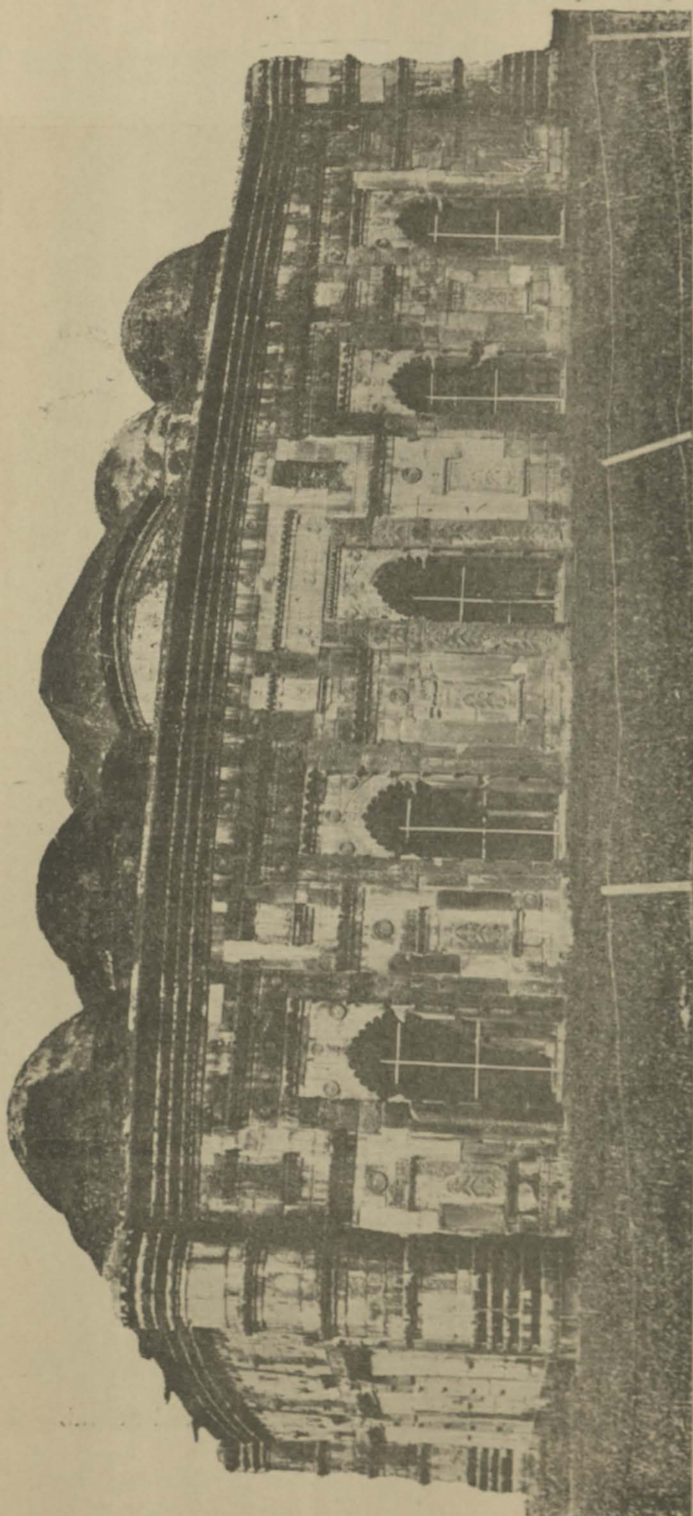


56. Gaur. Chhota Sona Masjid, the detail of the front decoration (between 1493-1519)



57. Gaur. Chhota Sona Masjid, the carved mihrab

Plate XXXVIII



58. Gaur. Chhota Sona Masjid



59. Bagerhat. Tomb of Khan Jahan (1459)

Plate XL



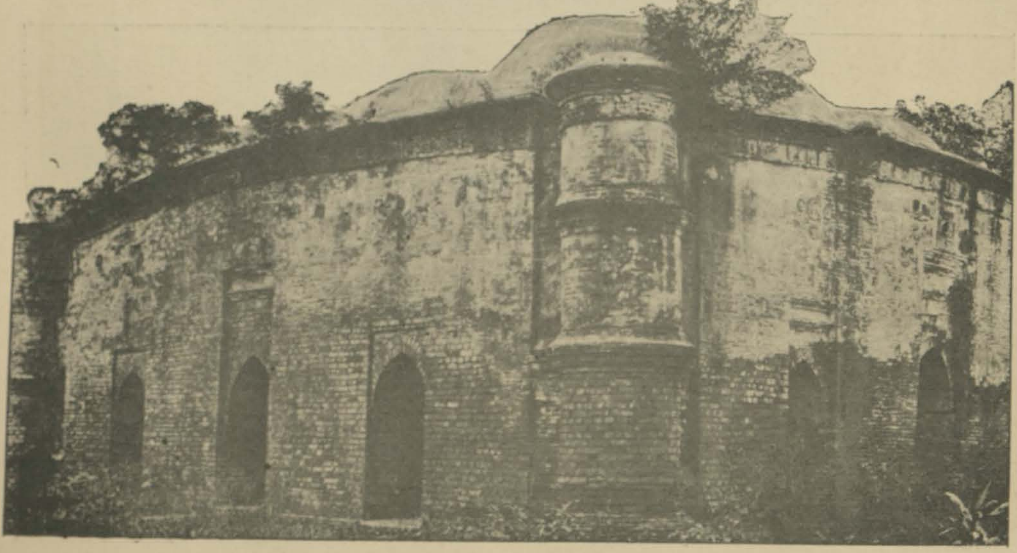
60. Bagerhat. Sath Gumbad Mosque (Cir. 1450)



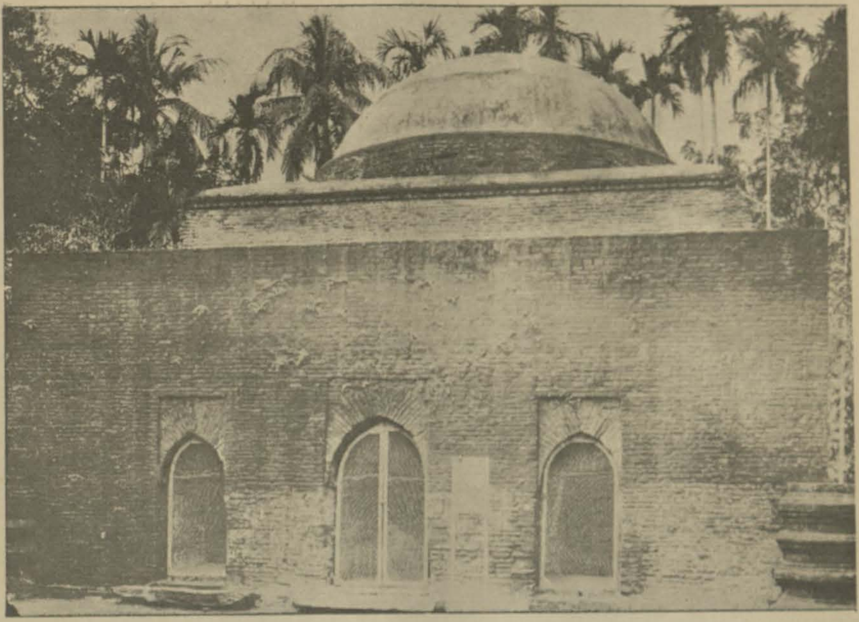
61. Bagerhat. Sath Gumbad Mosque, the interior view



62. Sailkuppa. Jami Masjid (renovated) (early 16th century)



63. Masjidkur. Mosque (cir. 1450)



64. Masjidbari. Mosque (1465)



65. Rampal. Baba Adam's Mosque (1483)



66. Sankarpasa. Mosque (15th century)



67. Sankarpasa. Detail of the mosque facade

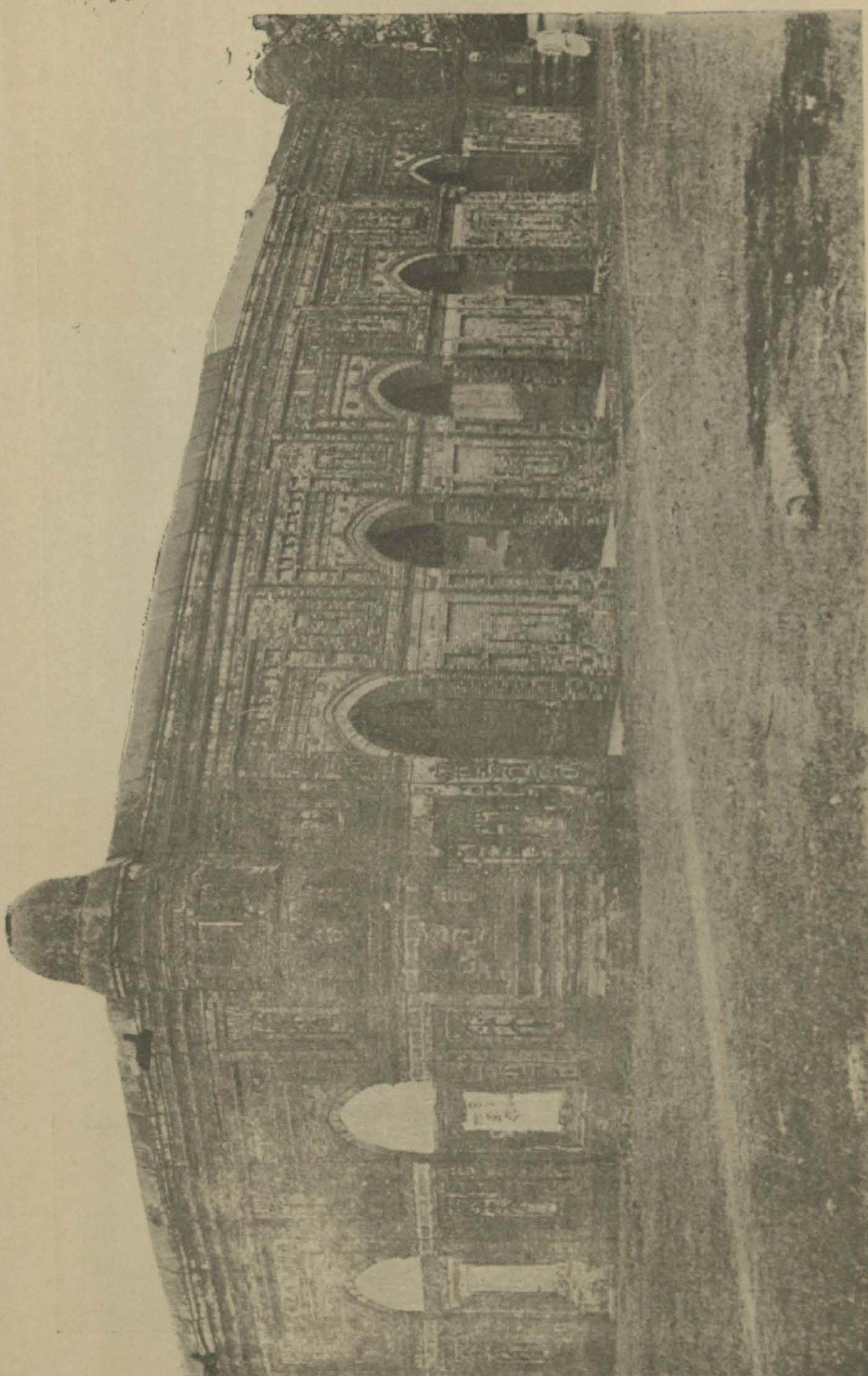


68. Sankarpasa. Mihrab in the mosque

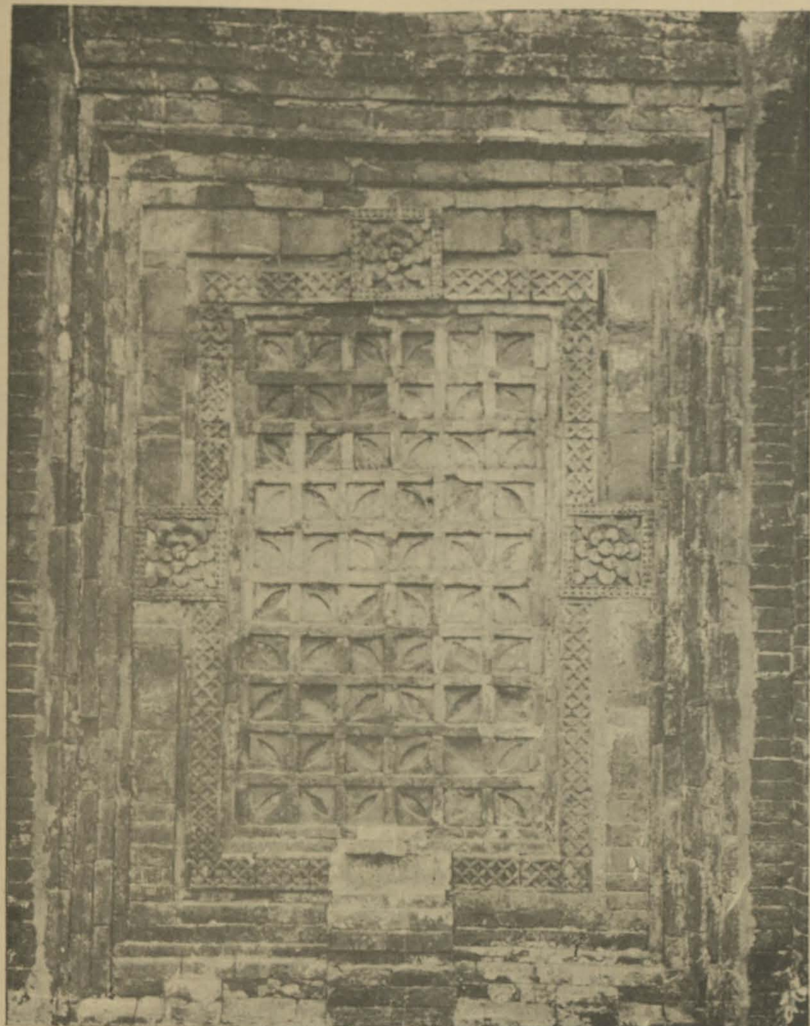


69. Bagha. Mihrab in the mosque (1523).

Plate XLVI



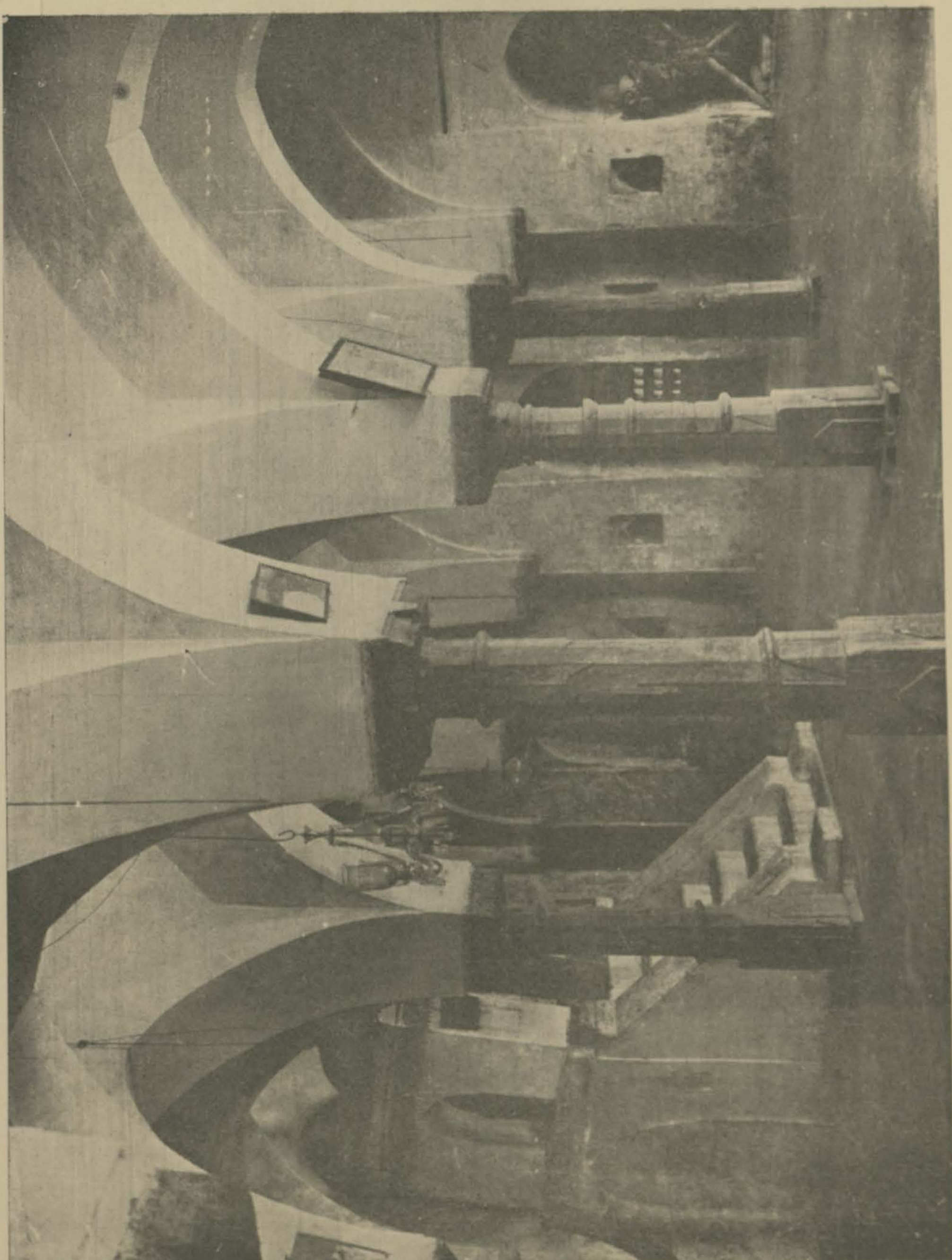
70. Bagha. Mosque (1523)



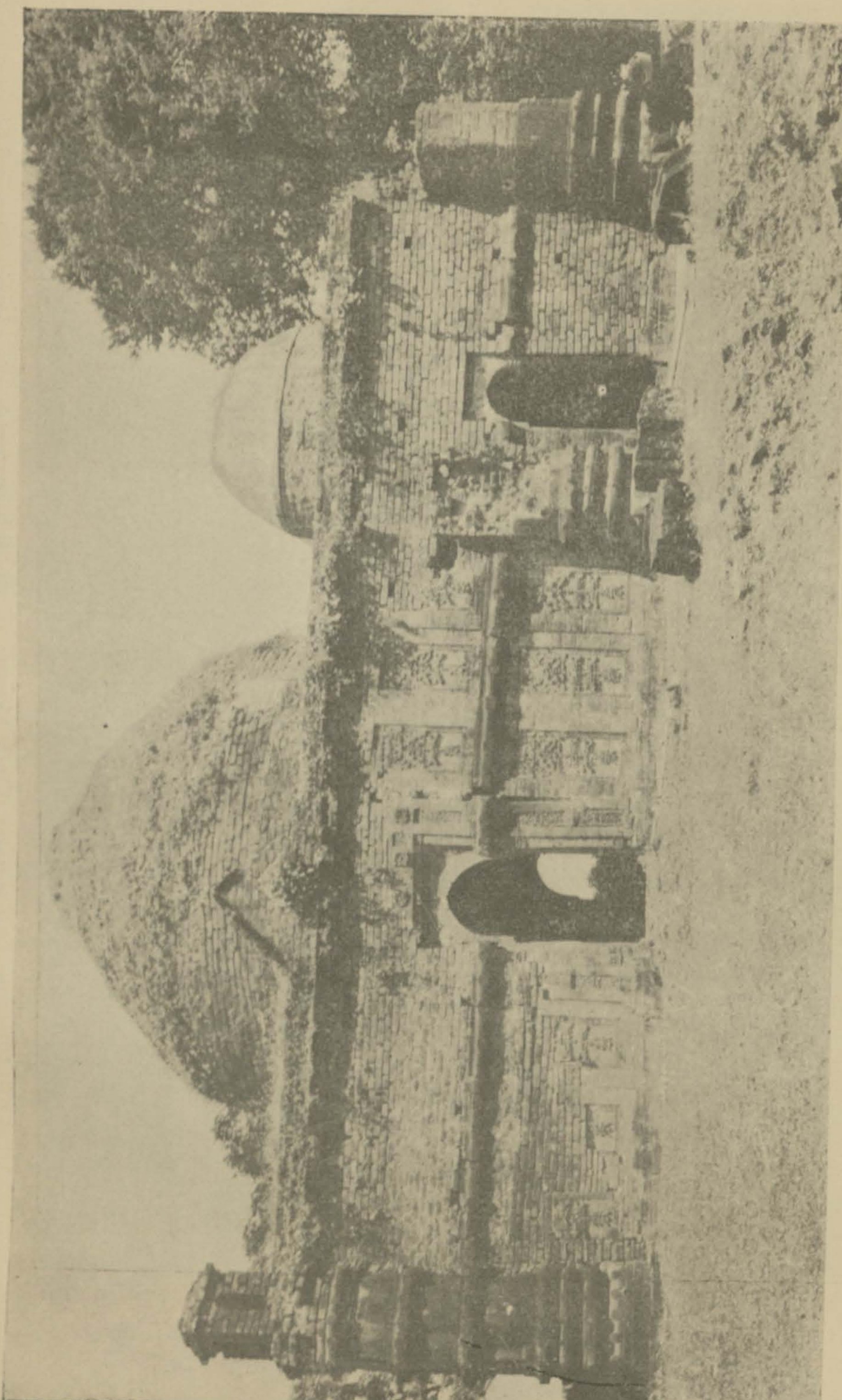
71. Bagha. Window grill in the mosque



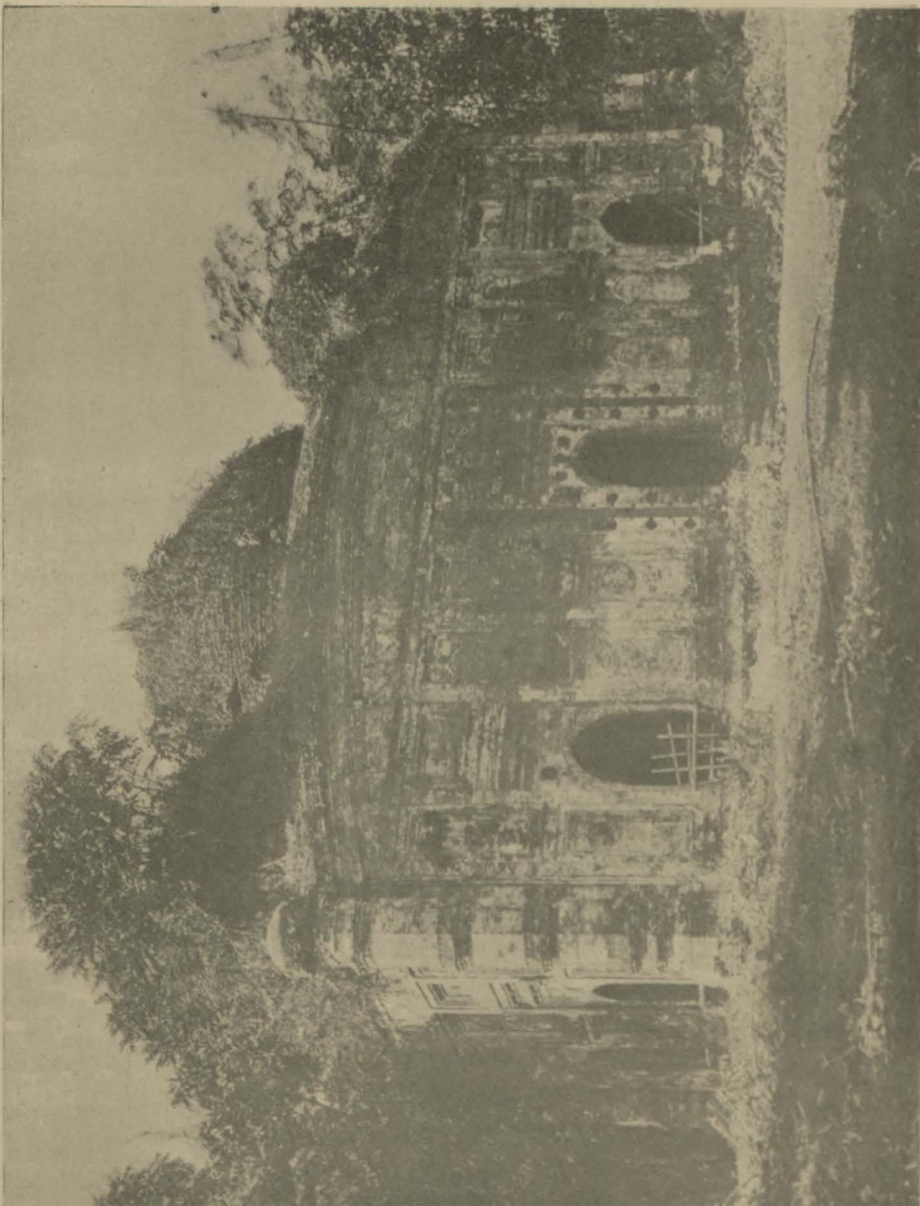
72. Bagha. Panel in the mosque



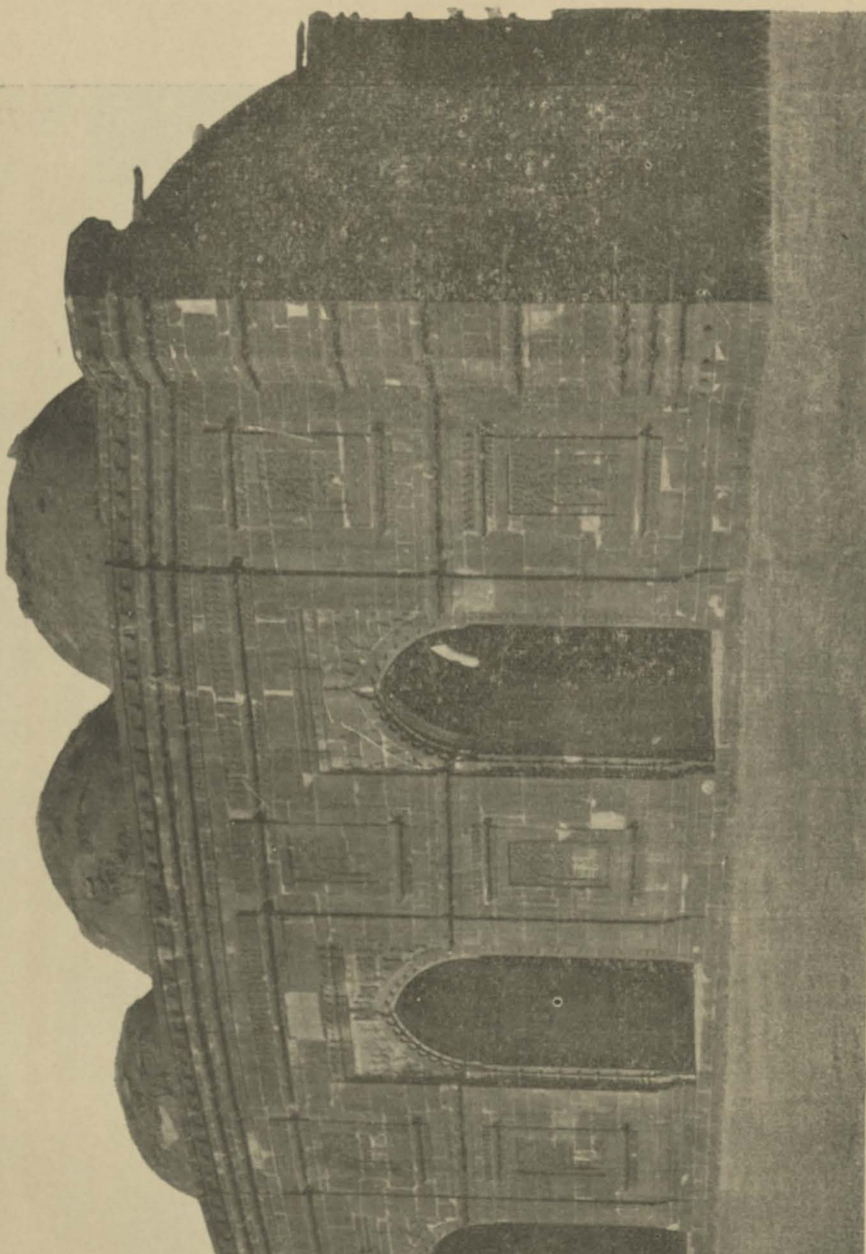
73. Shahzadpur. Interior of the mosque (15th century) (renovated)



74. Sura. Mosque (early 16th century)



75. Ashtagram. Qutb Mosque (Late 16th century)



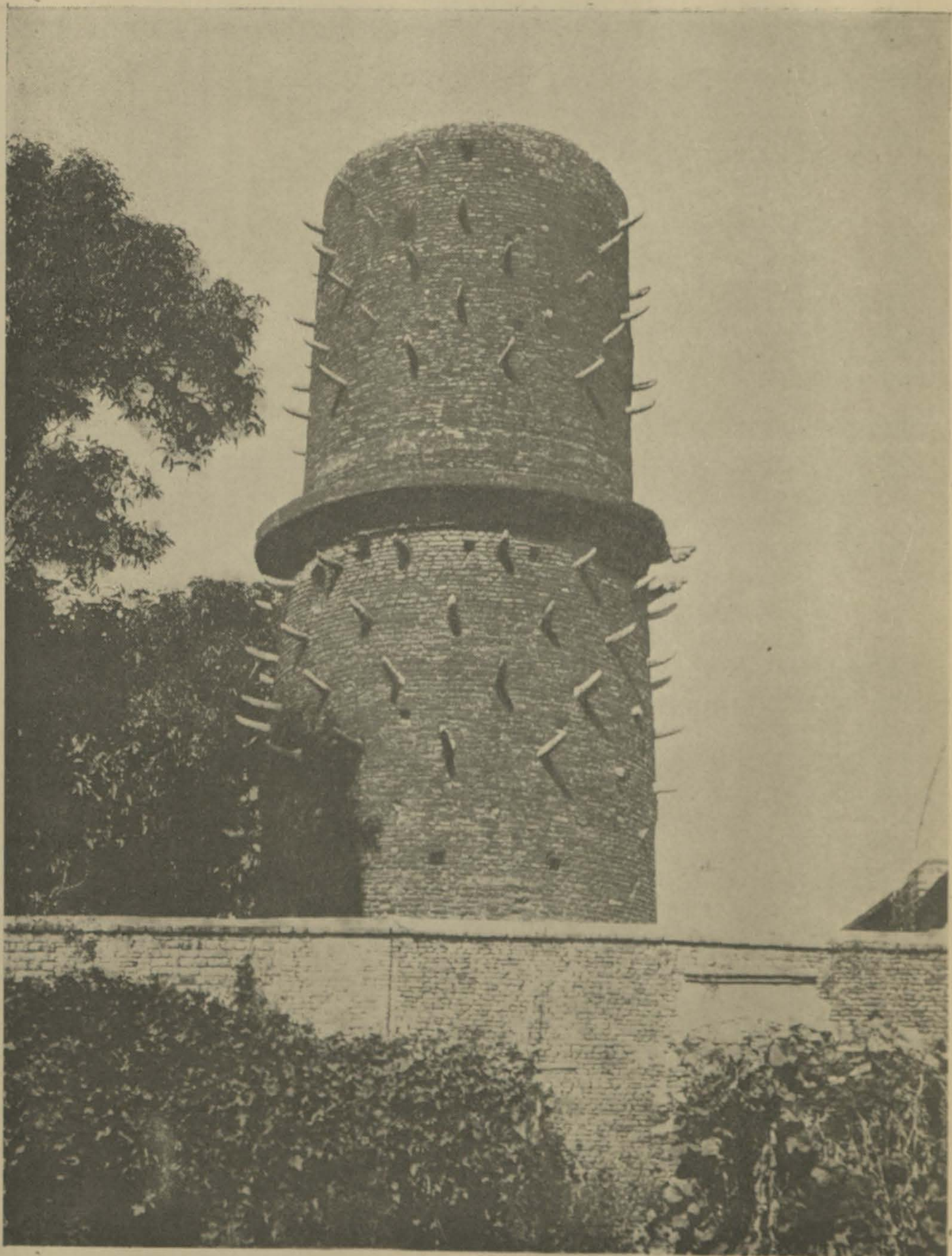
76. Kusumba. Mosque (1558)



77. Kusumba. Detail of the mosque entrance



78. Kusumba. Mihrab in the mosque



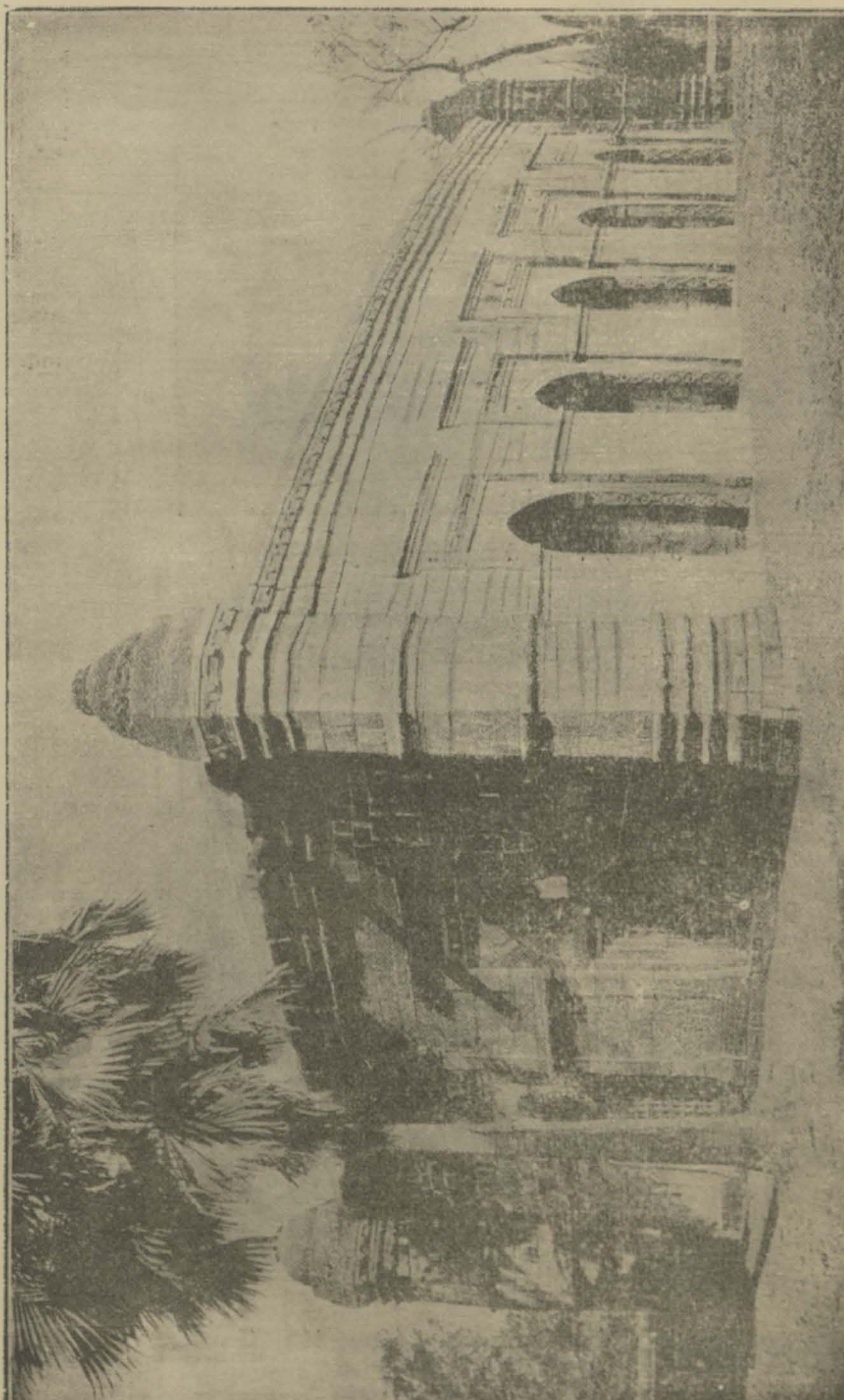
79. Old Malda, Nim Sarai Tower (Late 16th Century)



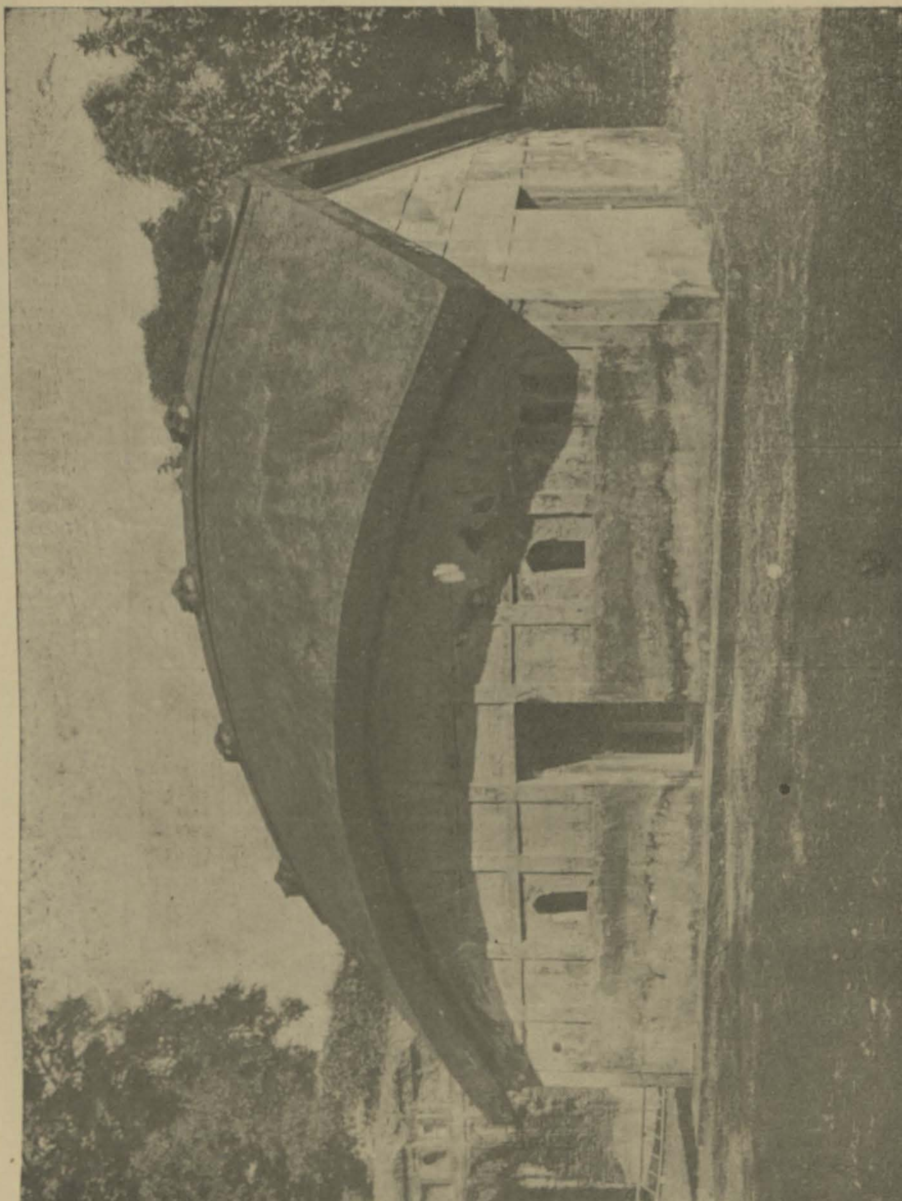
80. Old Malda. Jami Masjid (1596)



81. Old Malda. Katra Gate (Late 16th Century)



82. Hazrat Pandua. Qutb Shahi Mosque (1582)



83. Gaur. Tomb of Fath Khan (Cir. 1660)



84. Gaur. Tomb of Shah Niamatullah Wali (Cir. 1660)



85. Gaur. Shah Niamatullah Wali's Mosque, the interior view (Cir. 1660)



86. Gaur. Shah Shuja's Gate (1655)

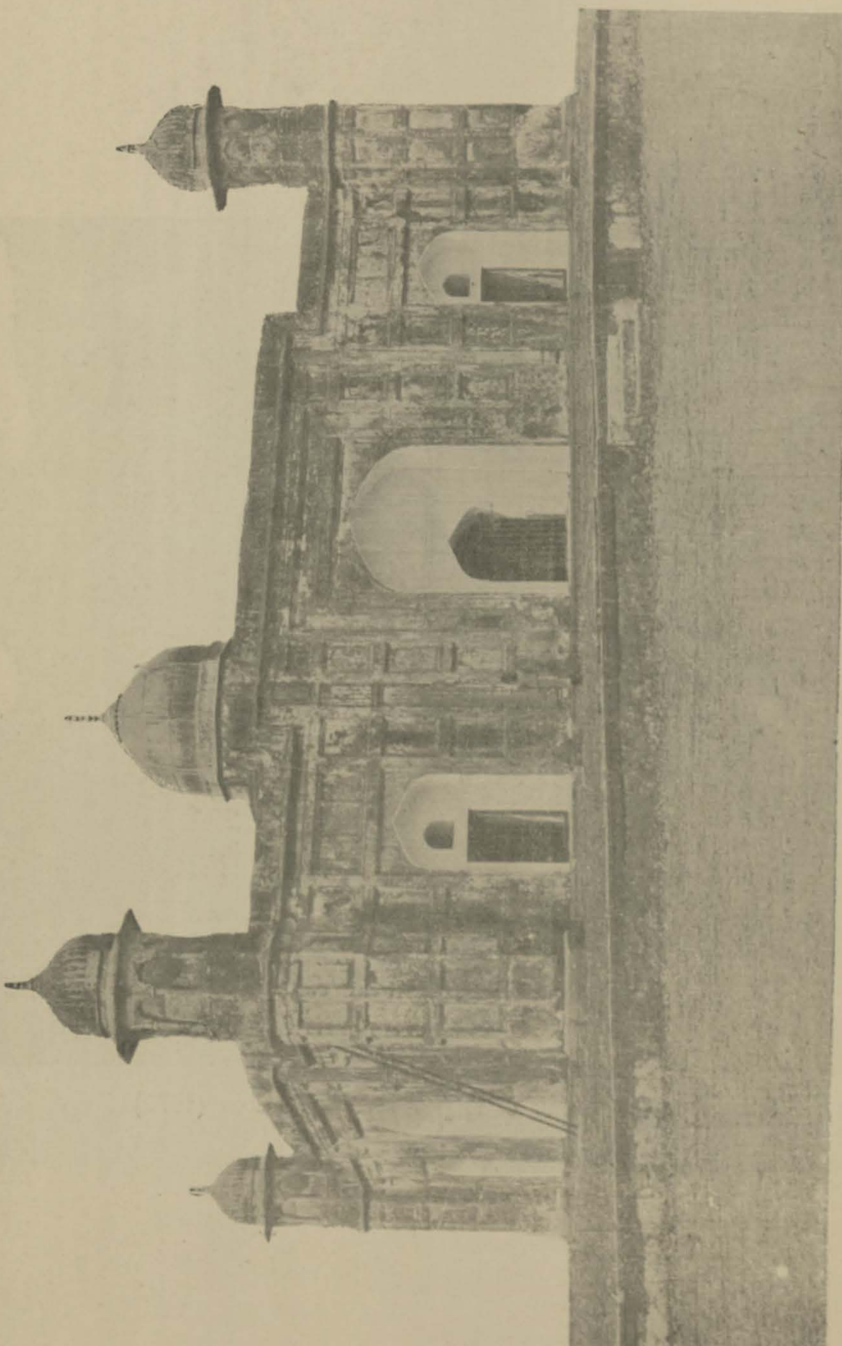


87. Dacca. Lalbagh fort, Southern Gate (1678–79)

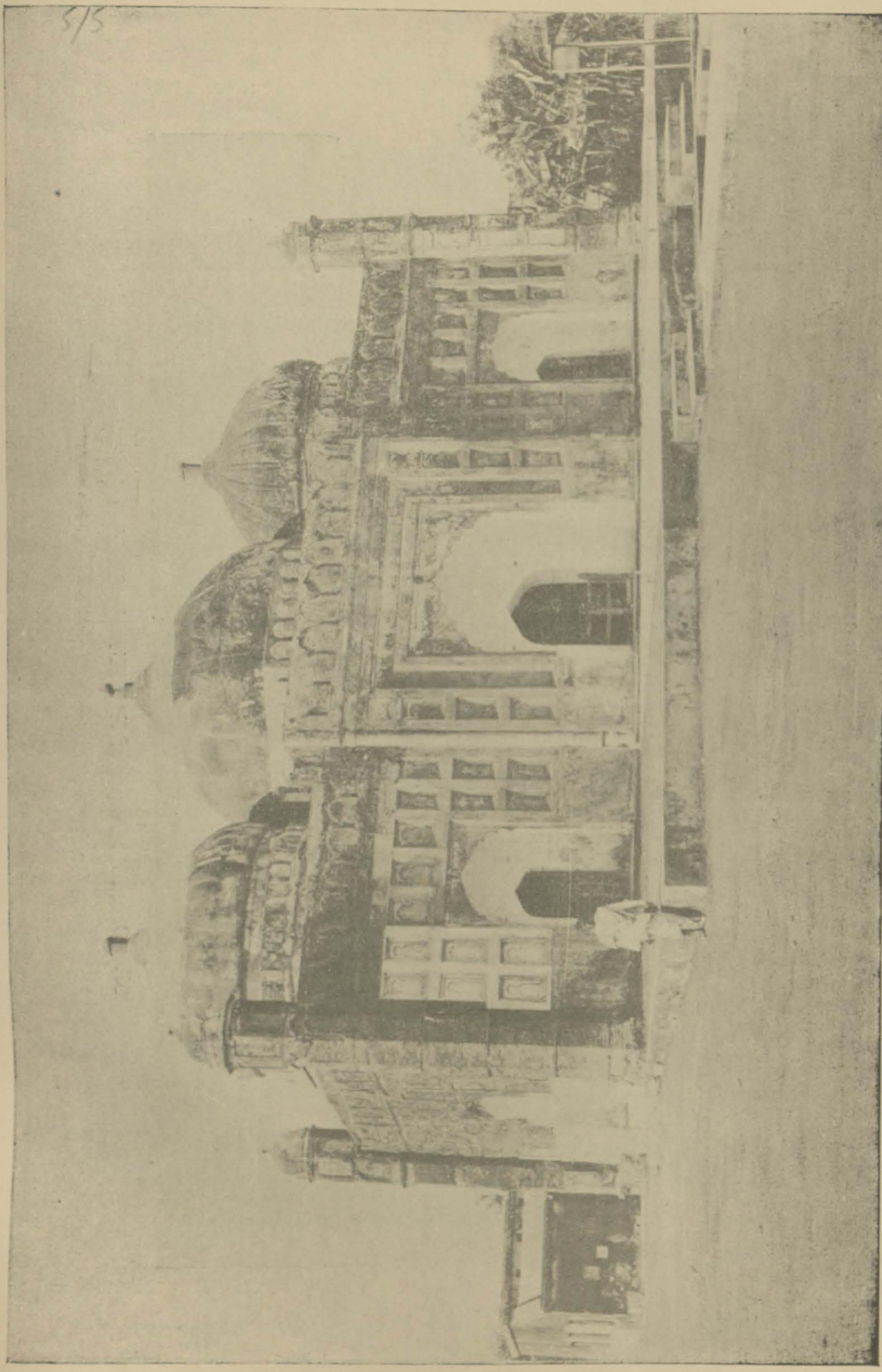


88. Dacca. Tomb of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz (1679)

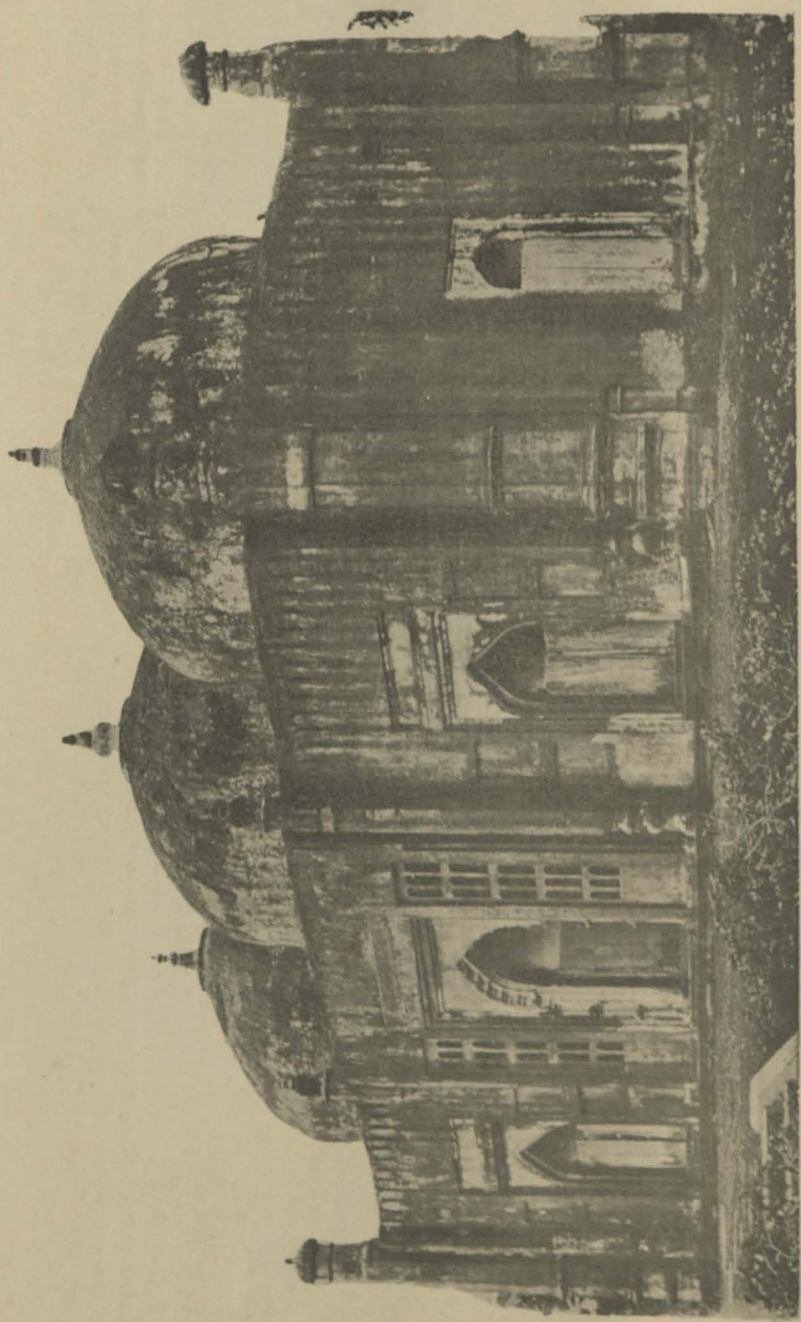
Plate LXII



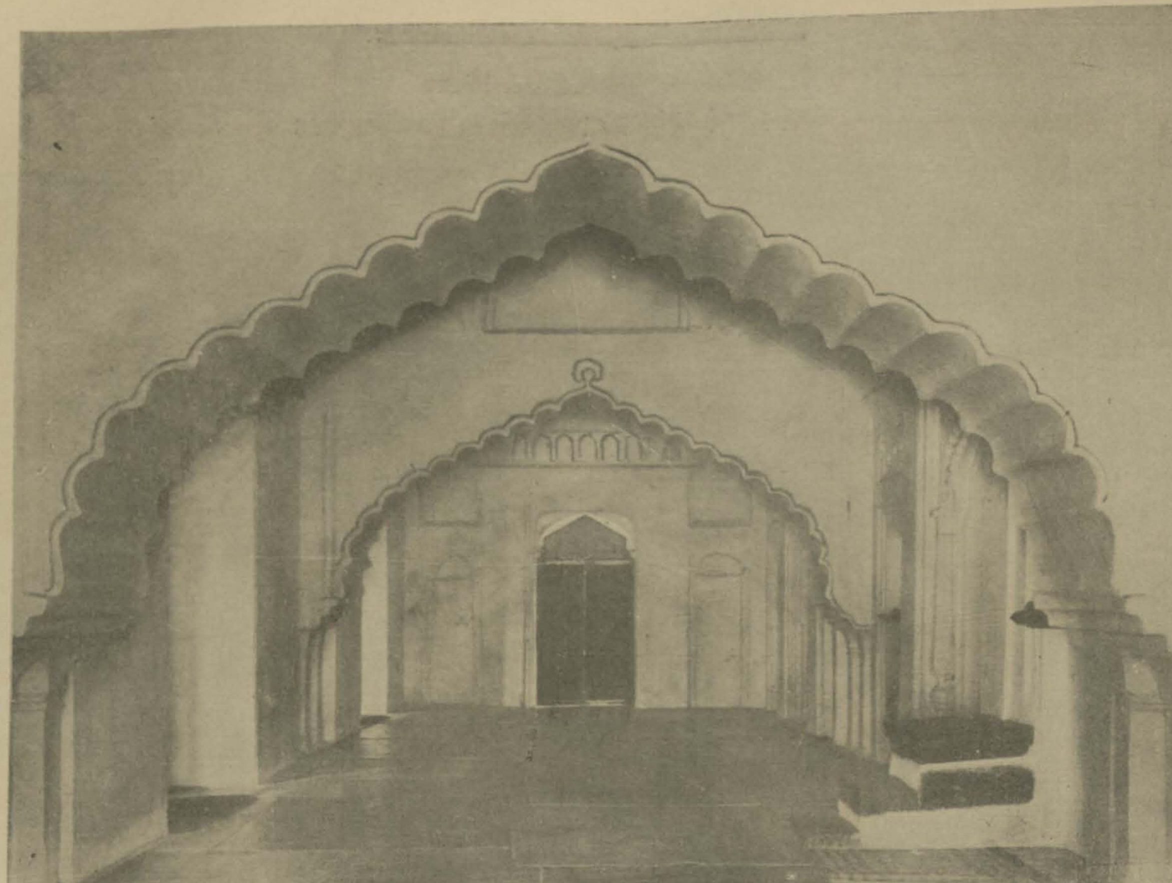
89. Dacca. Mausoleum of Bibi Pari (Cir. 1684)



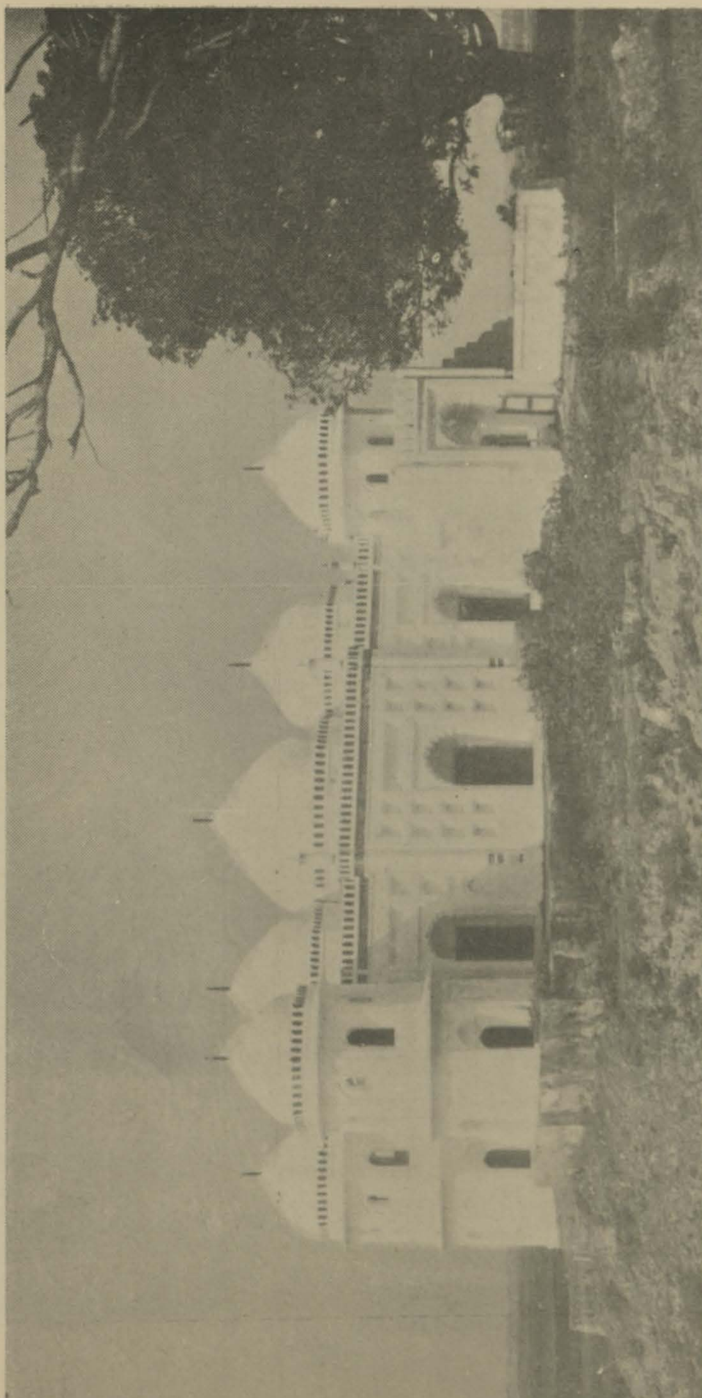
90. Dacca. Lalbagh Mosque (1679)



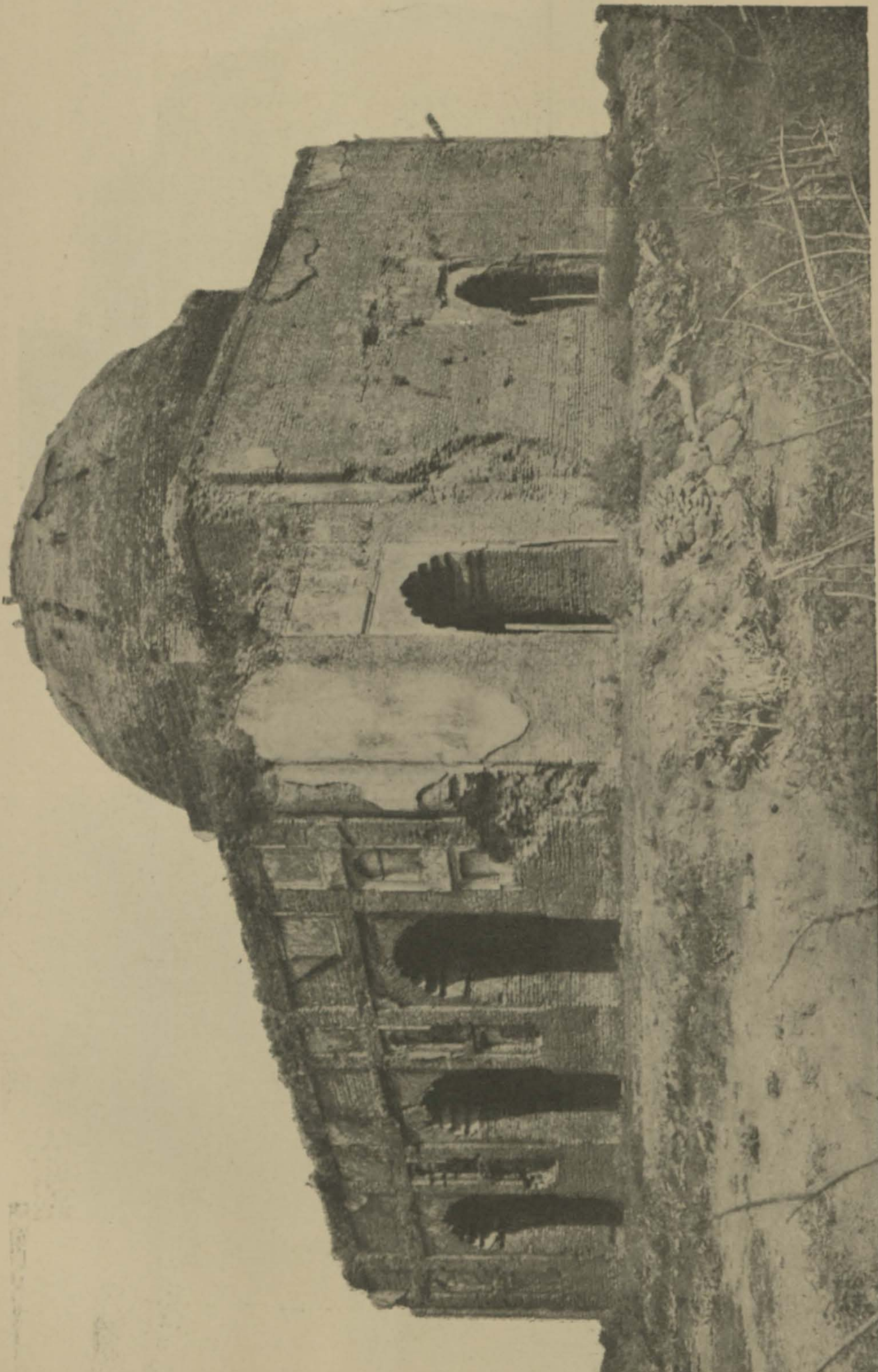
91. Dacca. Mosque of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz (1679)



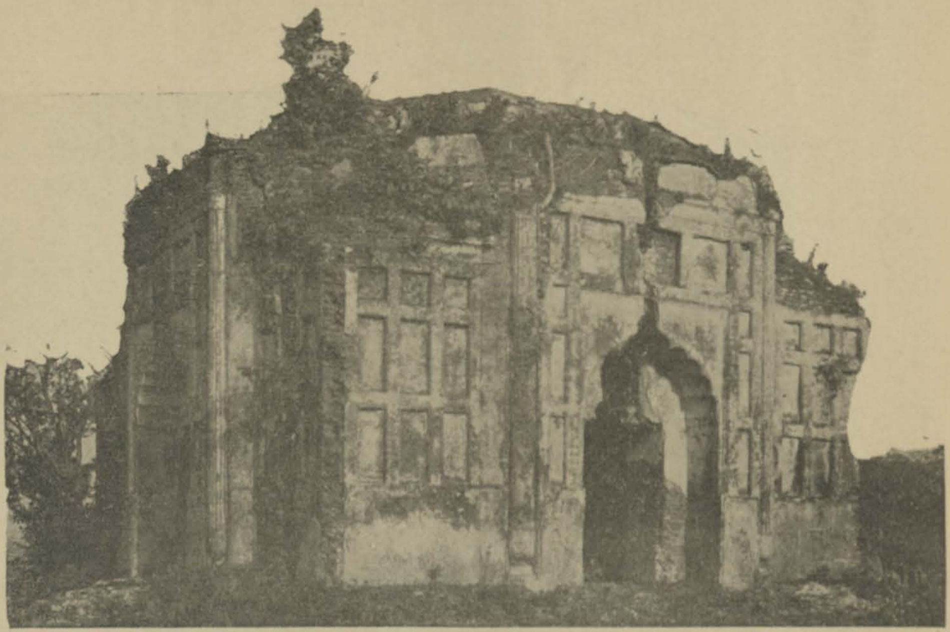
92. Dacca. Mosque of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz, the interior arcades



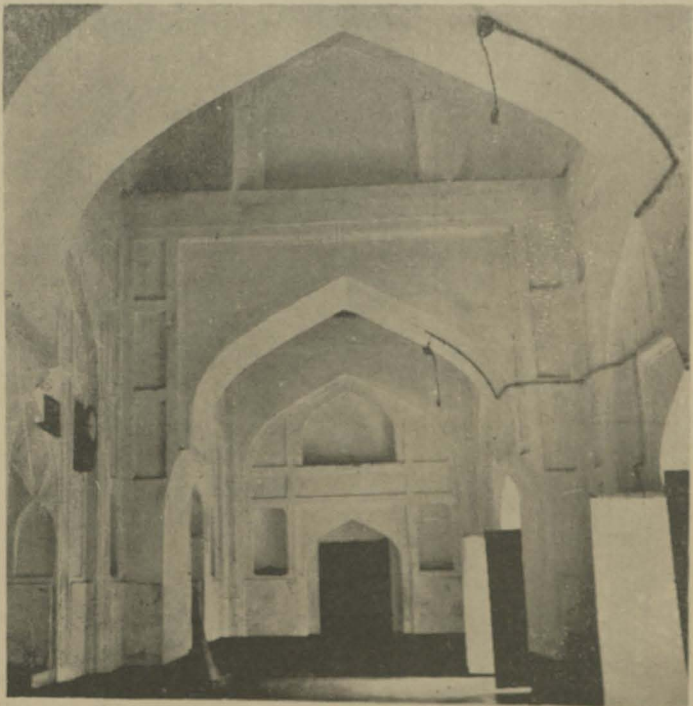
93. Dacca. Satgumbad Mosque (cir. 1680)



94. Dacca. Dara Begam's tomb (mid-17th century)



95. Dacca. Tomb (unknown) near Satgumbad (17th cenutry)



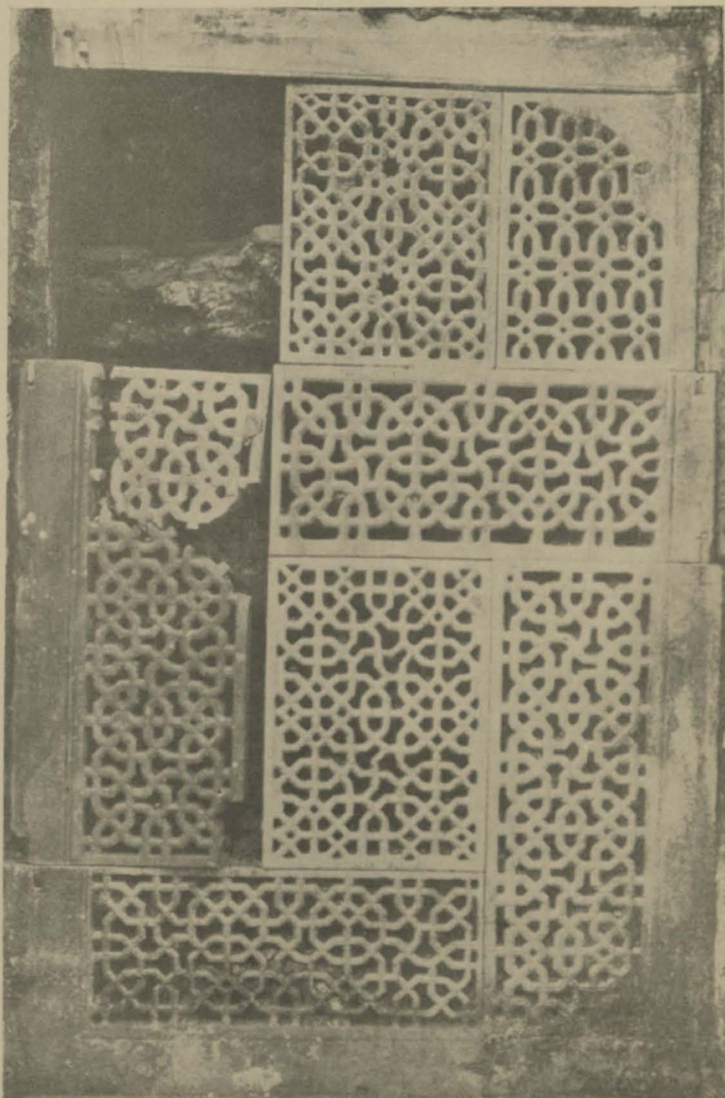
96. Narayanganj. Bibi Mariam's Mosque, interior view
(17th century)



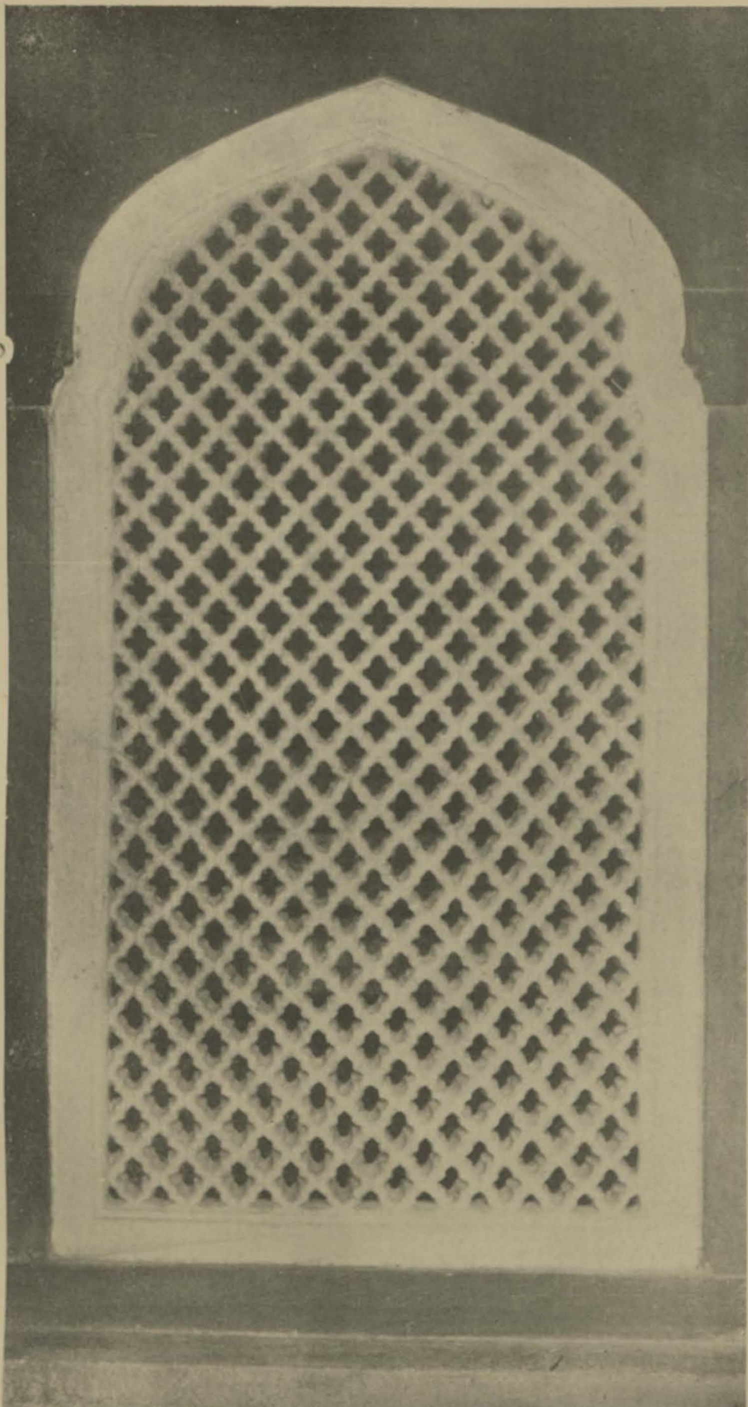
97. Dacca. Allakuri's Mosque (cir. 1680)



98. Dacca. Pagla Pul (cir. 1660)



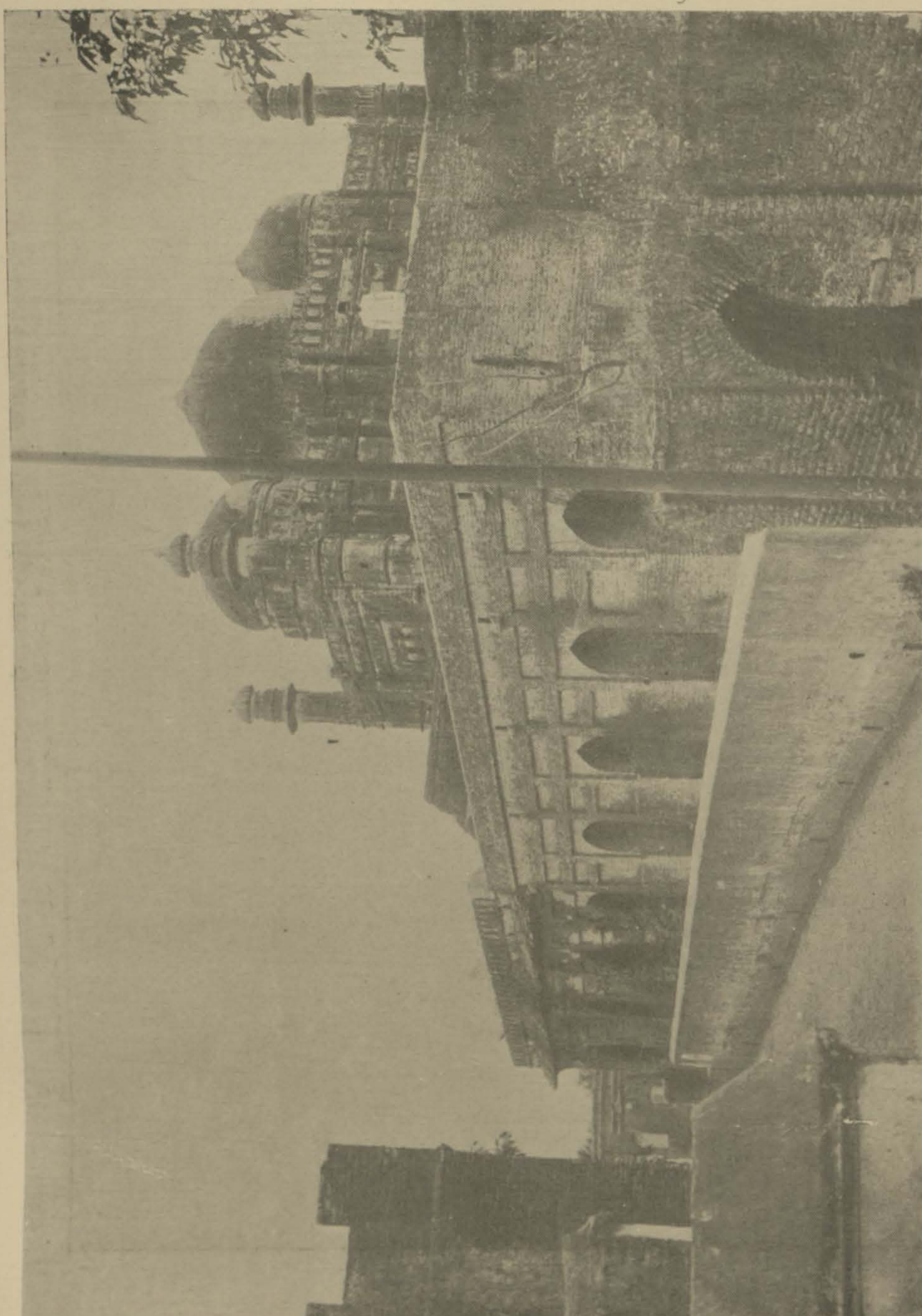
99. Dacca. Tomb (unknown) near Satgumbad, screen



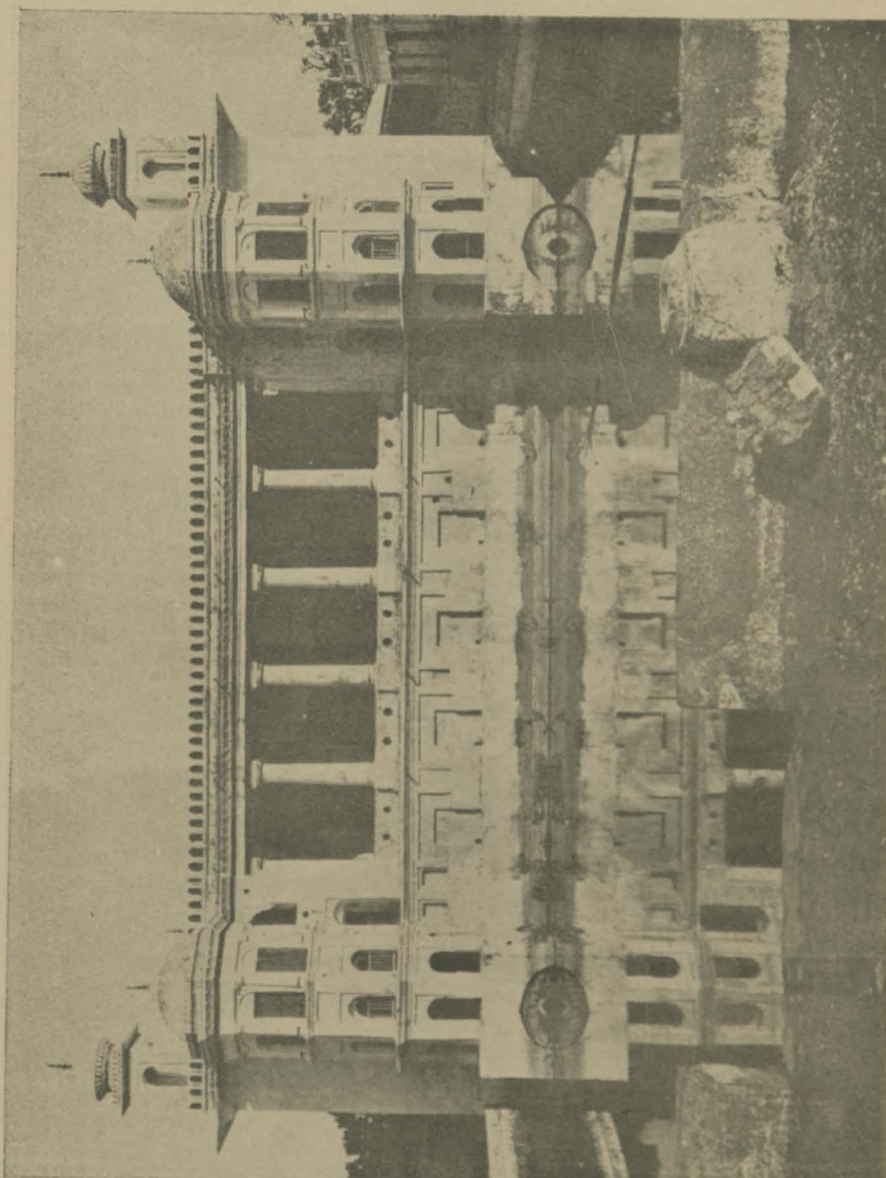
100. Dacca. Tomb of Bibi Pari, the marble screen (cir. 1684)



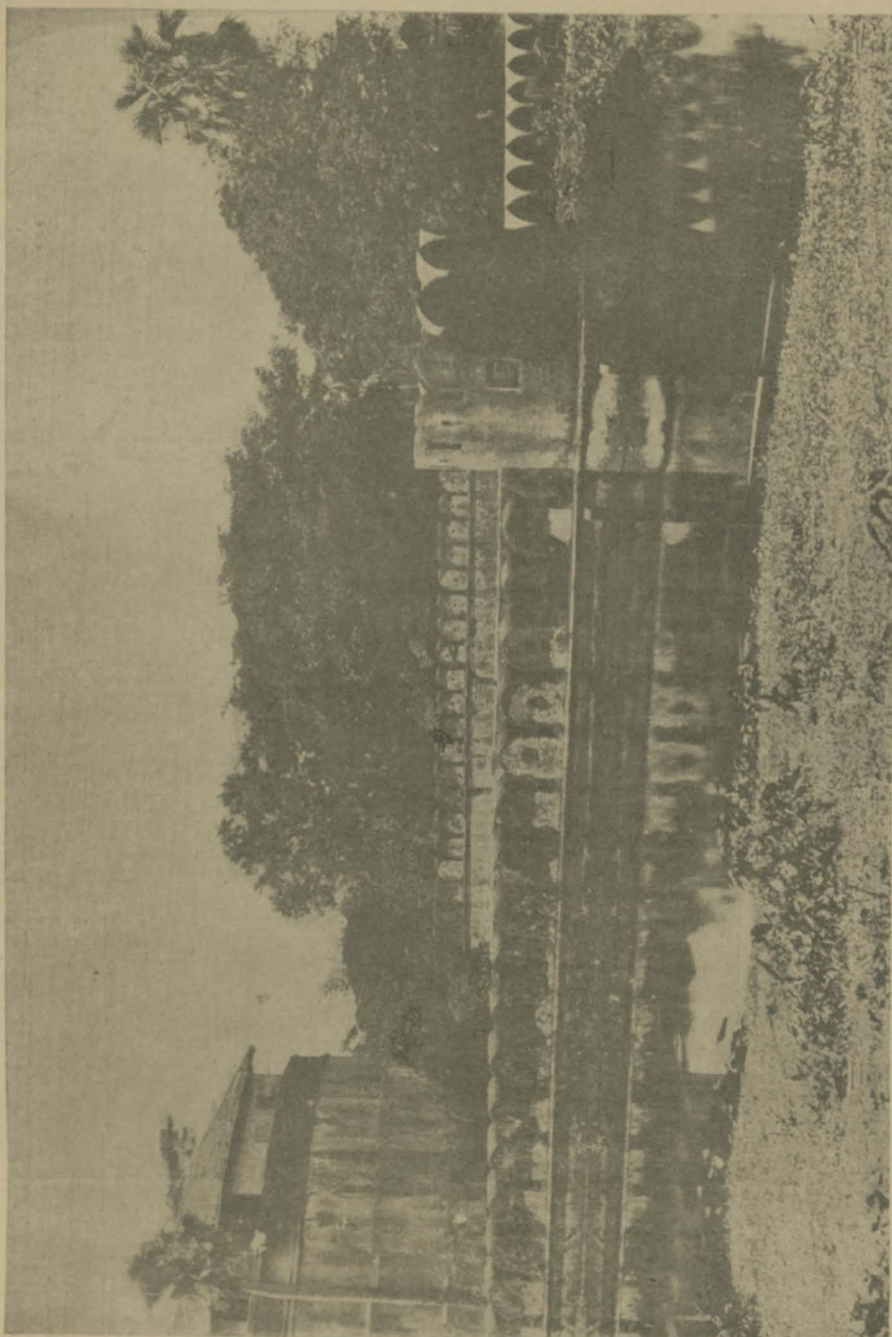
101. Dacca. Kartalab Khan's Mosque (cir. 1700)



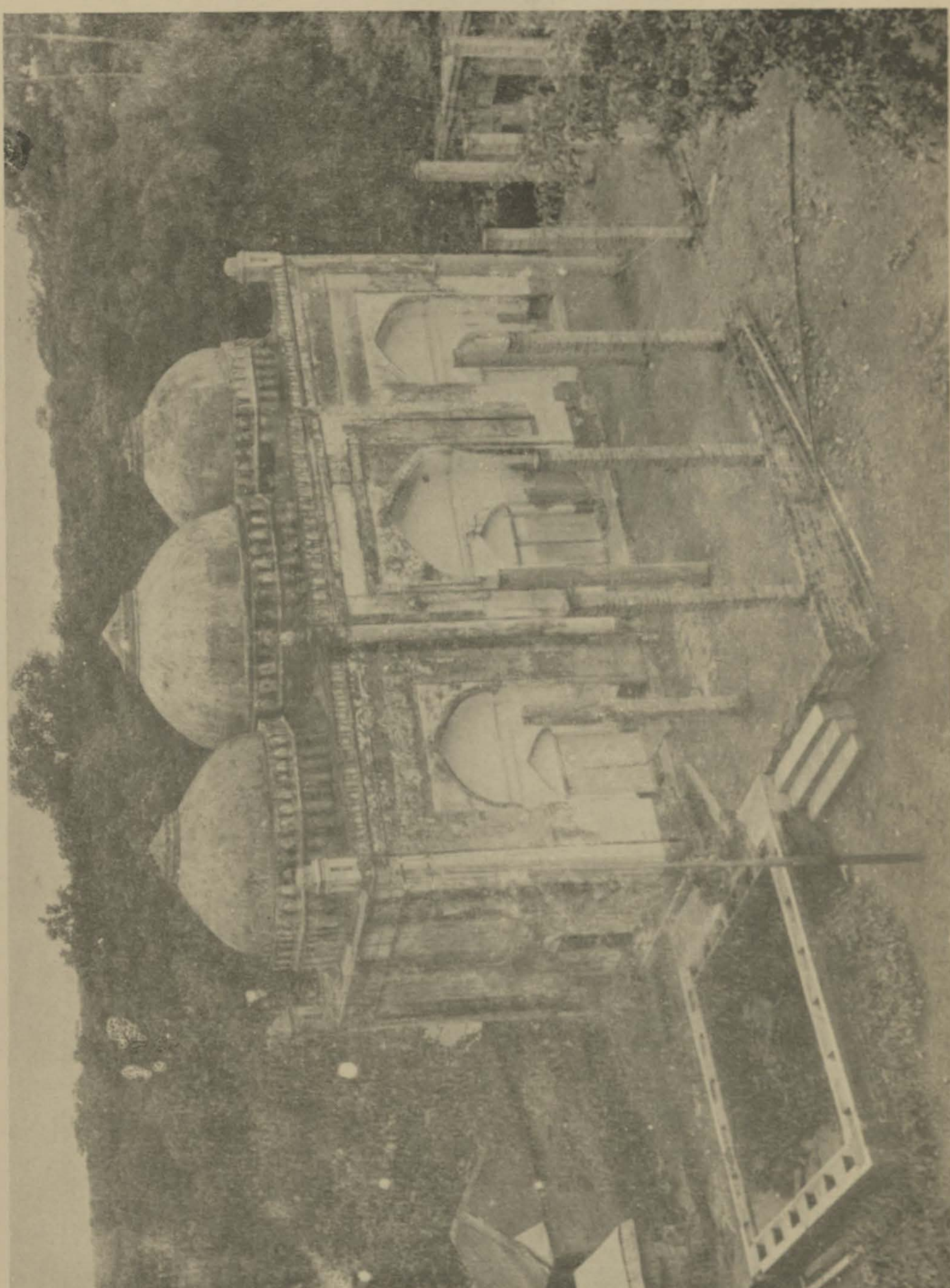
102. Dacca. Khan Muhammad Mirdha's Mosque (1706)



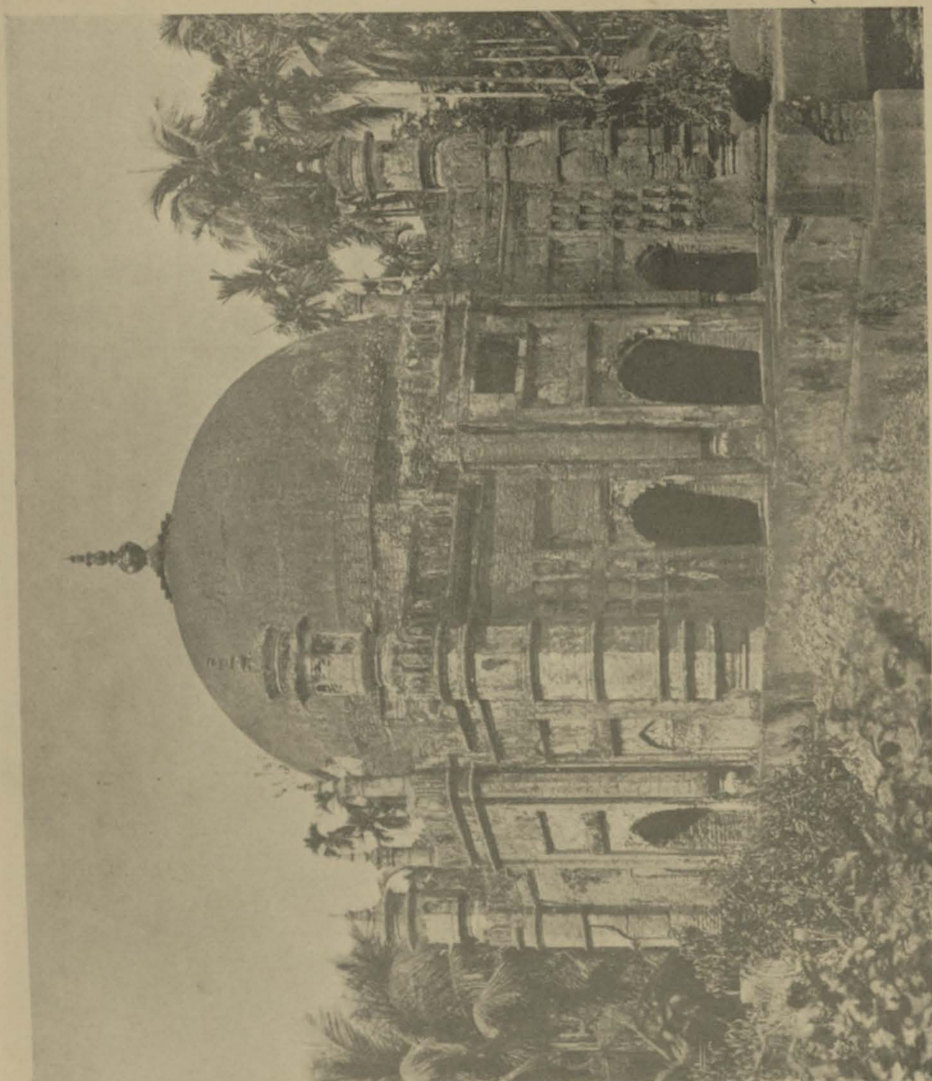
103. Dacca. Husaini Dalan (renovated). (cir. 18 century)



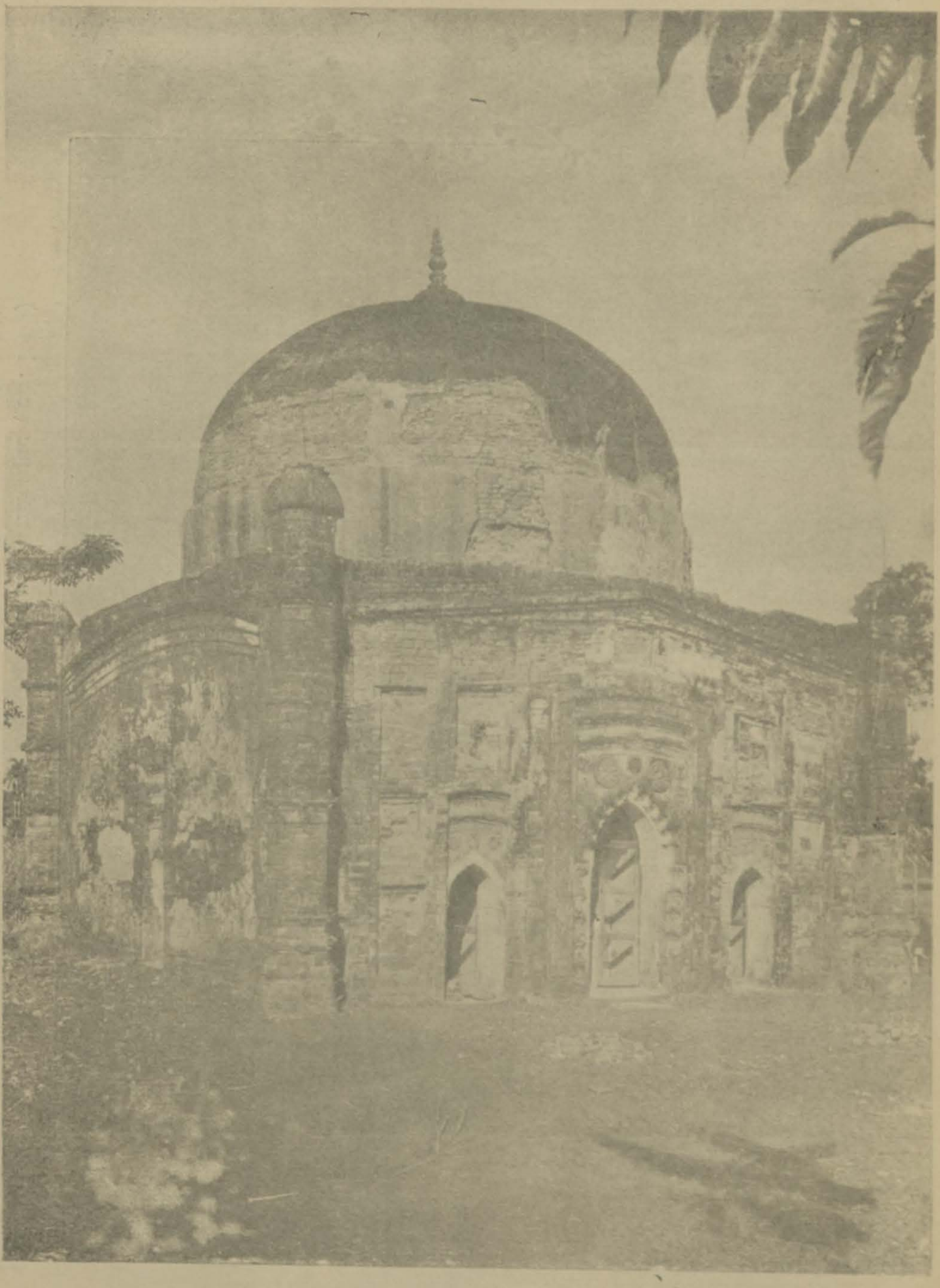
104. Munshiganj. Water fort (cir. 1660)



105. Narayanganj. Bibi Mariam's Mosque (17th century)



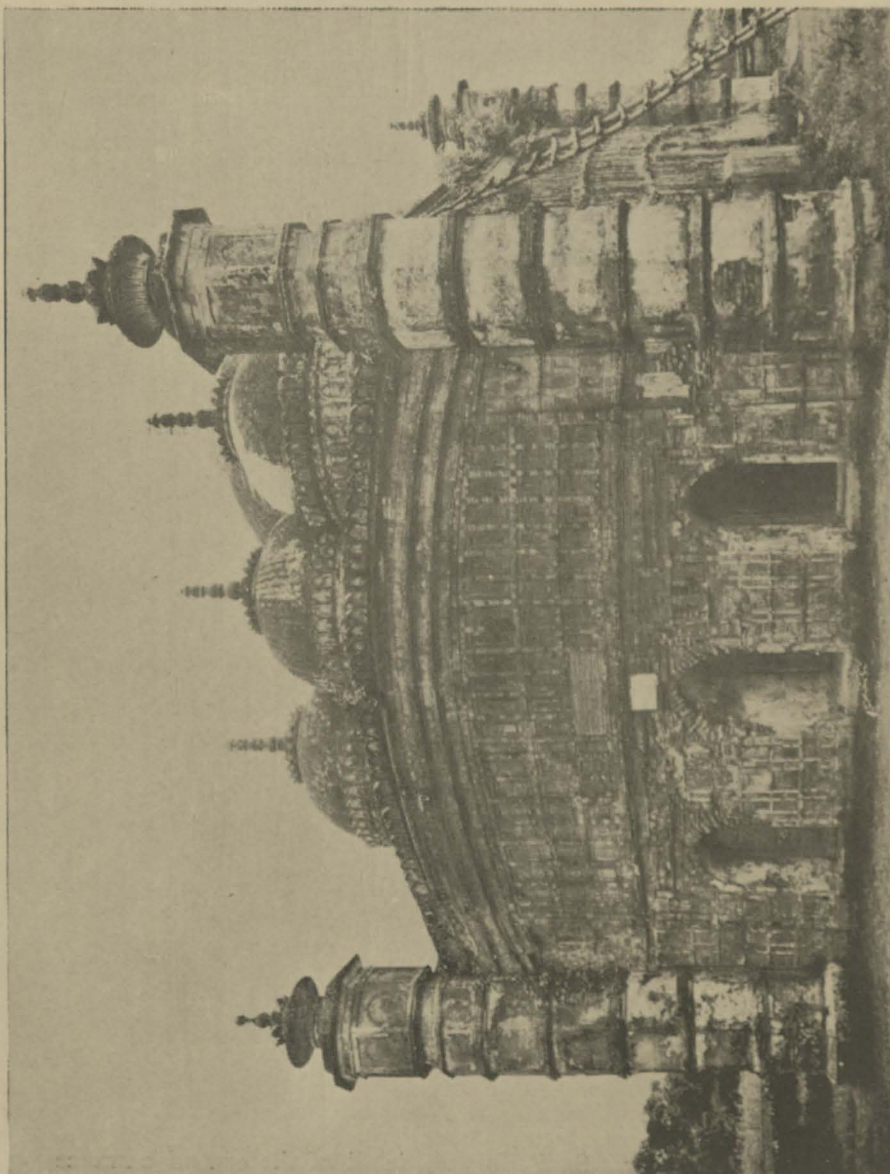
106. Egarasindur. Shah Muhammad's Mosque (cir. 1680)



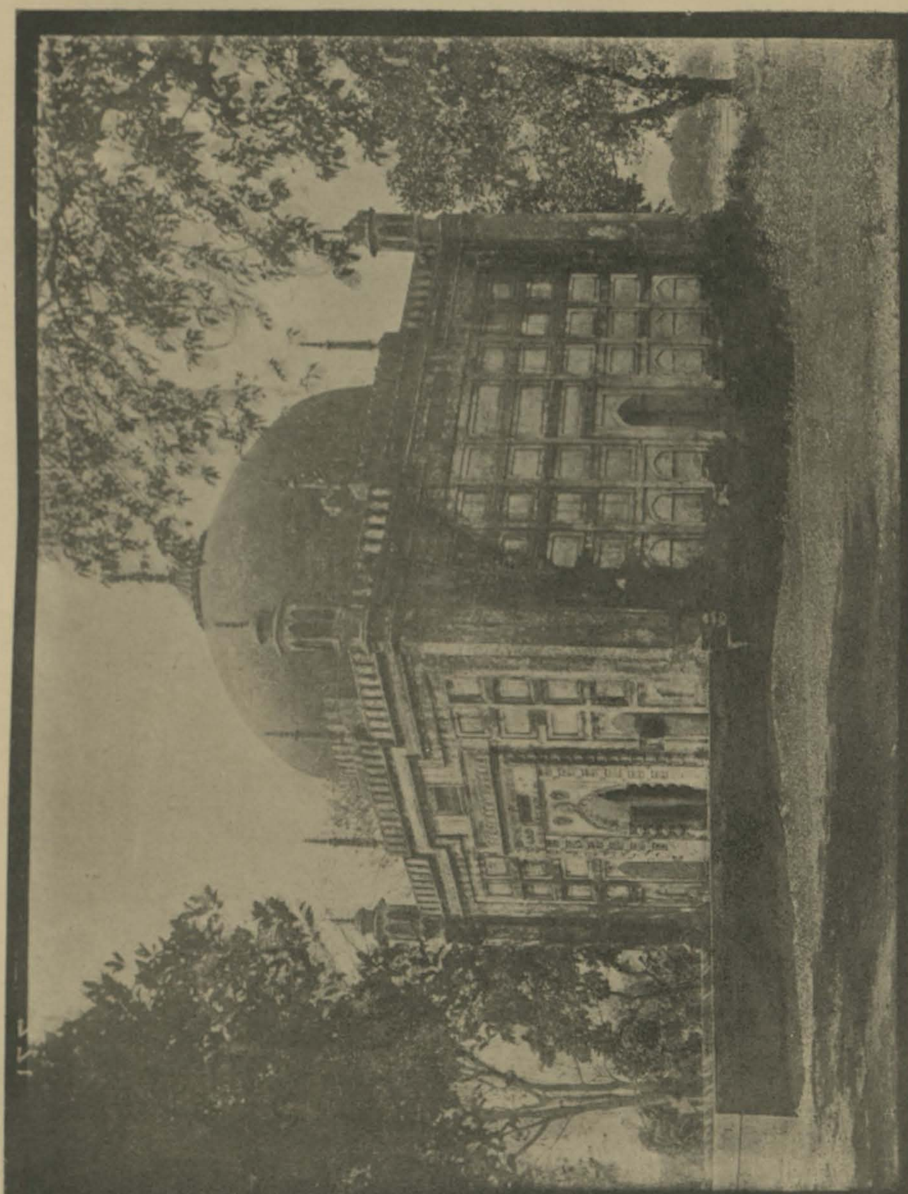
107. Egarasindur. Sadi Mosque (1652)



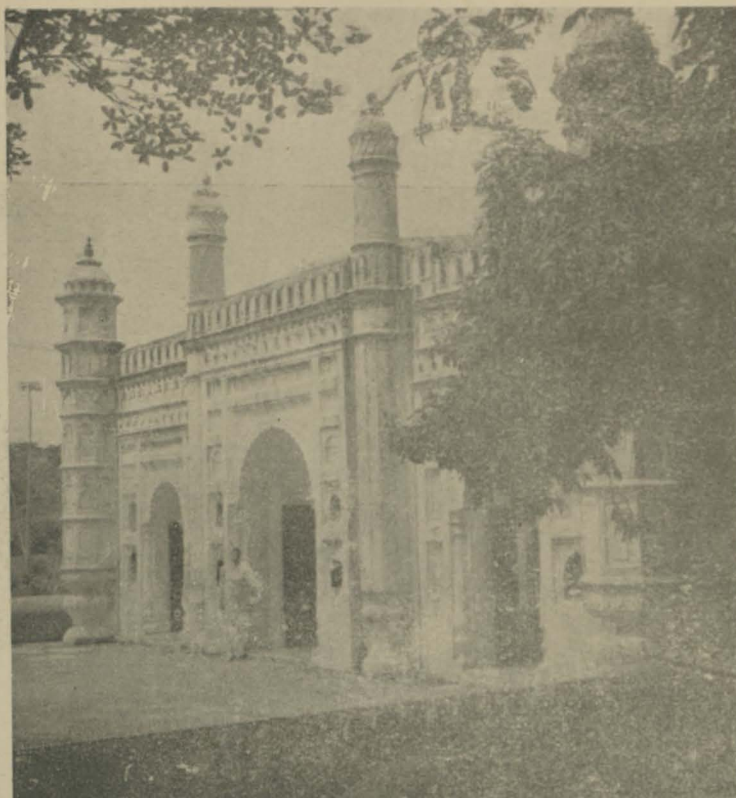
108. Egarasindur. Sadi Mosque, detail of the central entrance



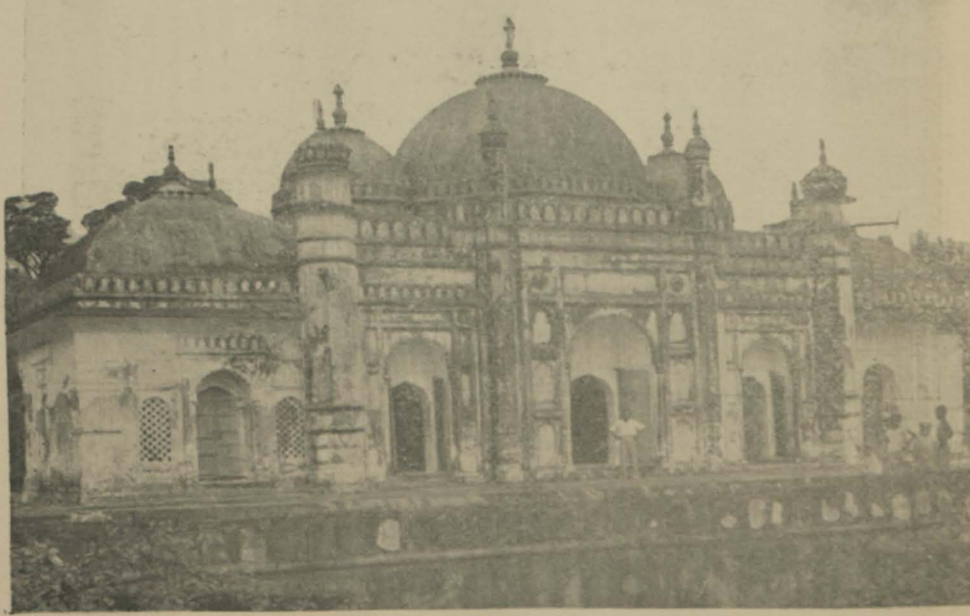
109. Atiya. Jami Masjid (1609)



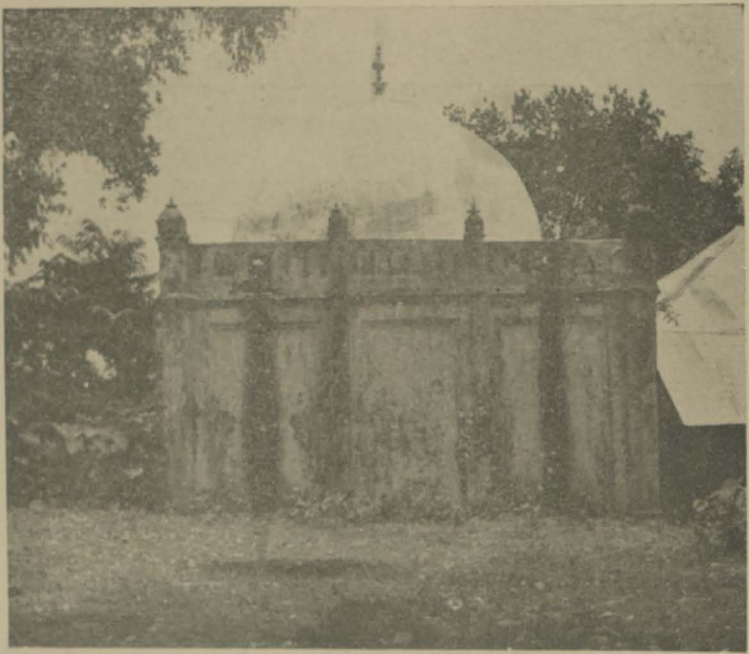
110. Gurai. Mosque (cir. 1680)



111. Chittagong. Mosque in the dargah of Bayazid Bustami (17th century)



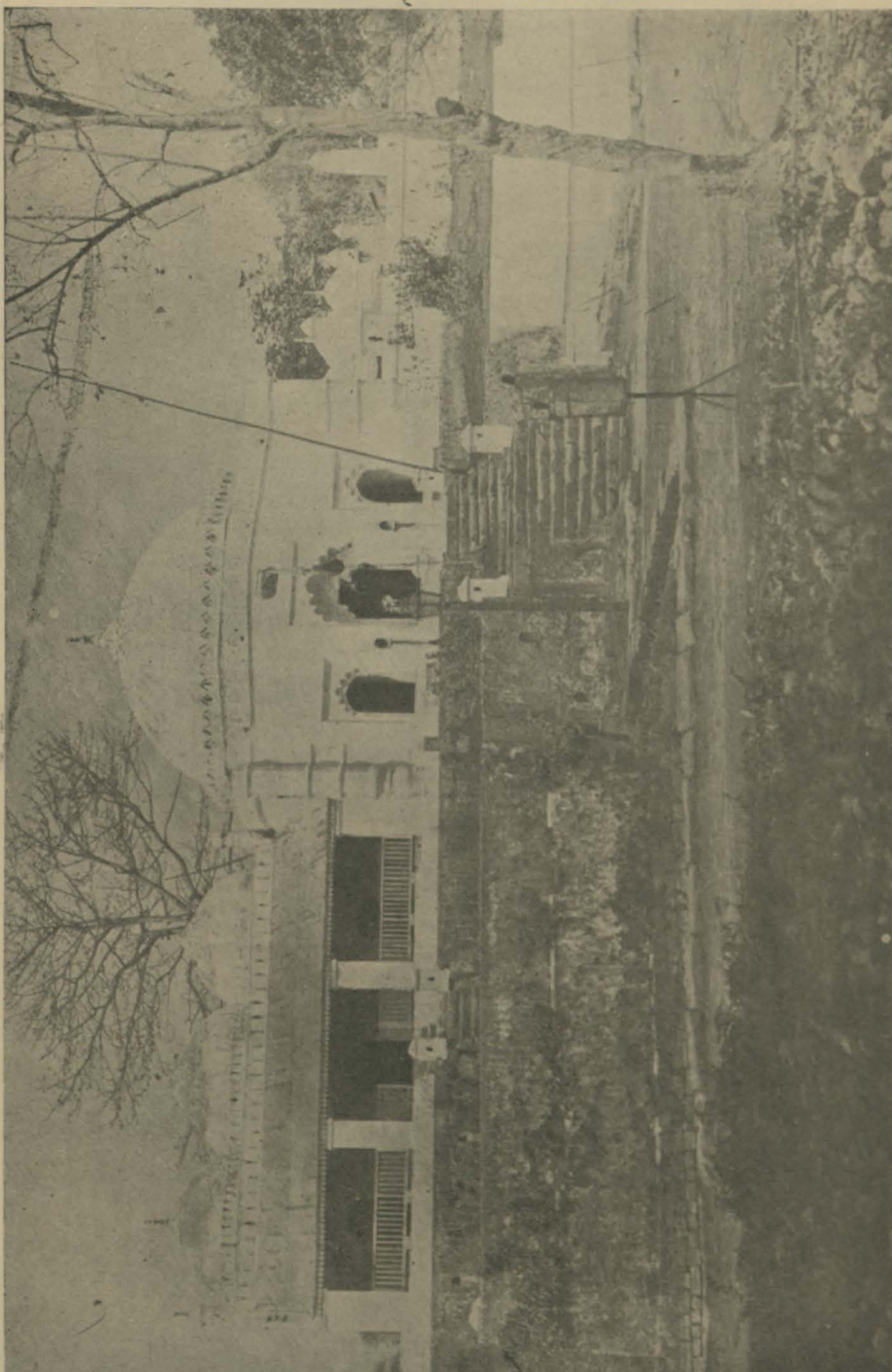
112. Chittagong. Qadam Mubarik Mosque (1719)



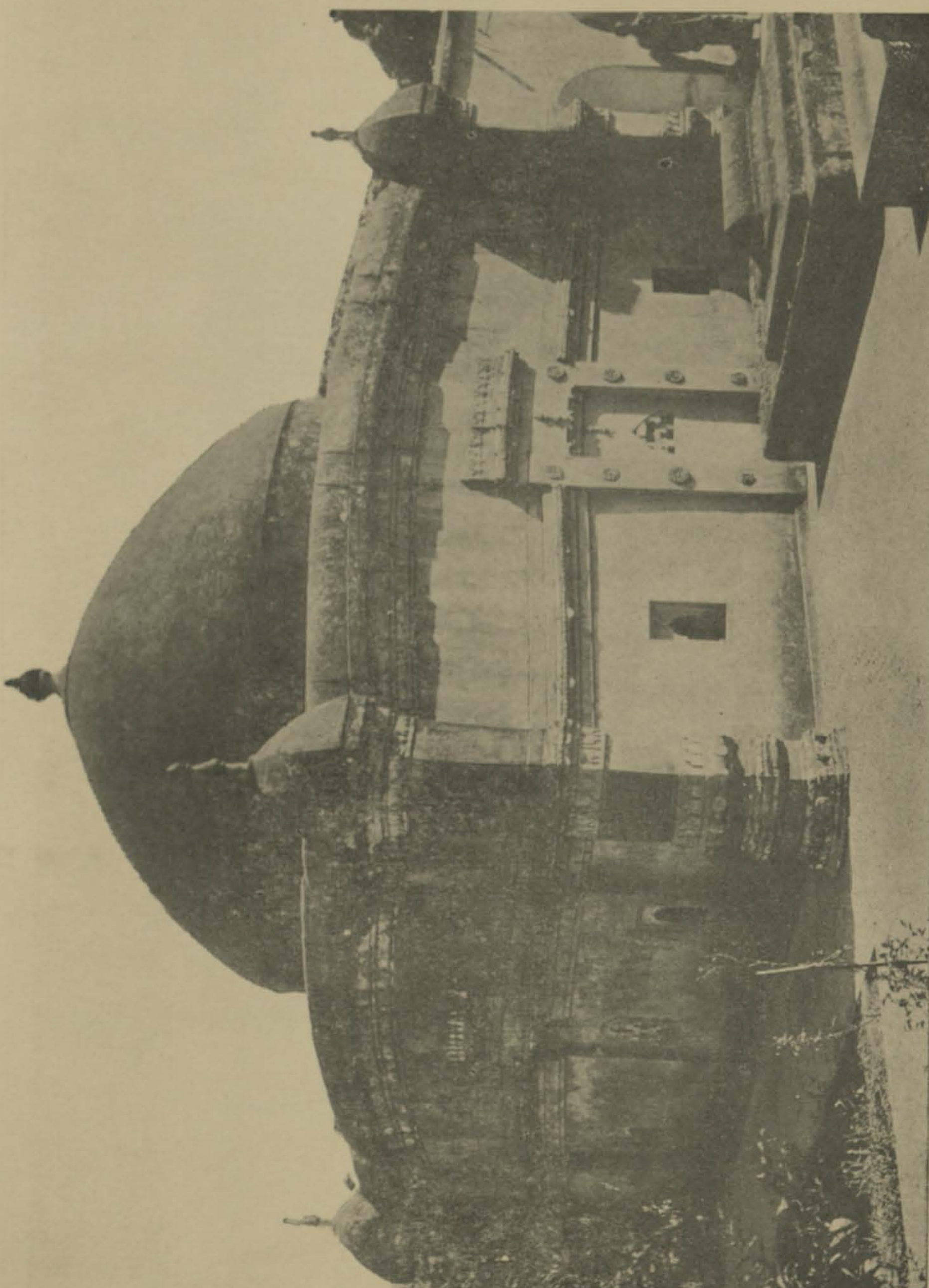
113. Mahasthan. Farrukh Siyar's Mosque (1718)



114. Sylhet. Mosque in the dargah of Shah Poran (17th century)

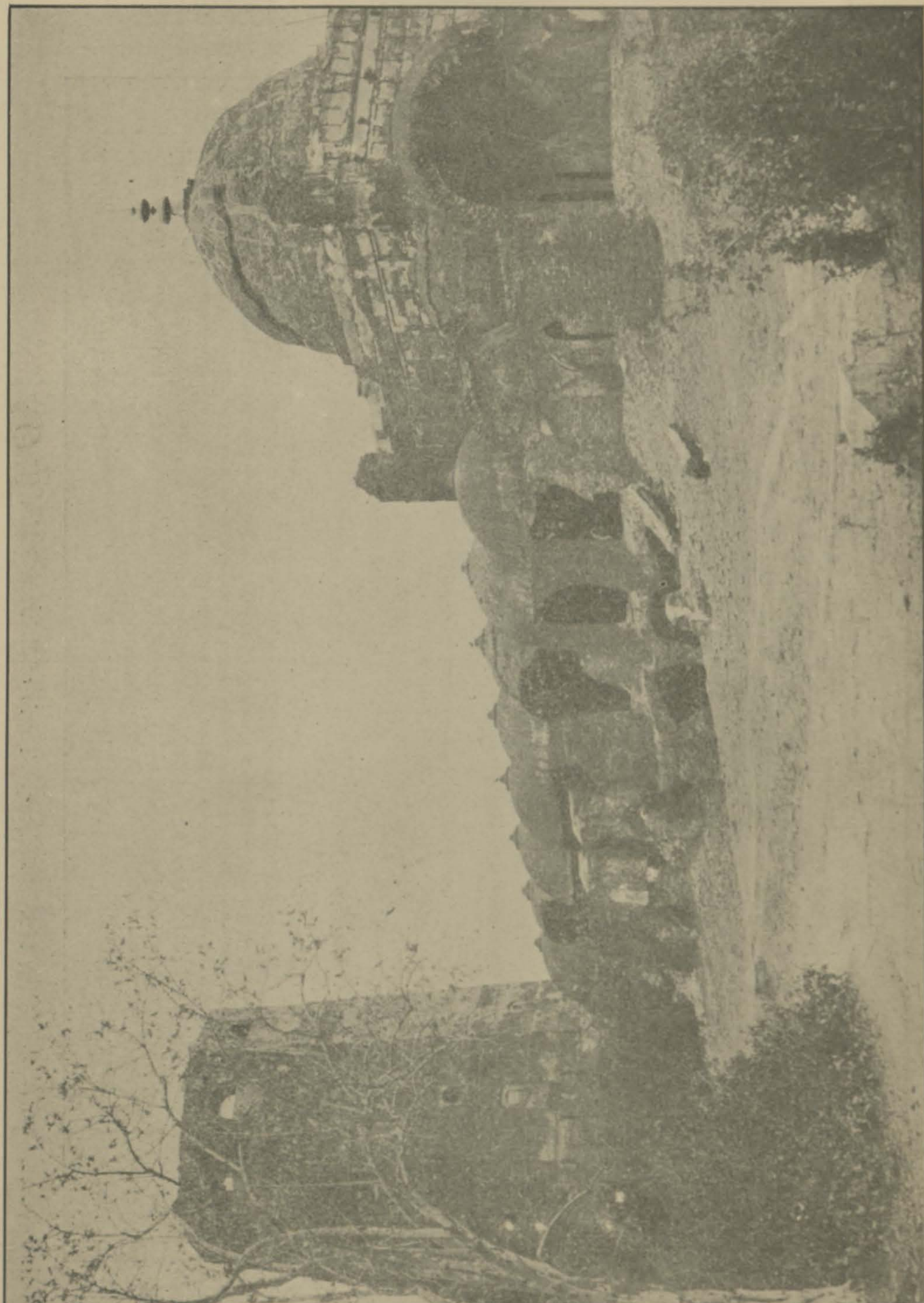


115. Sylhet. Dargah of Shah Jalal



116. Burdwan. Tomb of Bahram Sakka (1562)

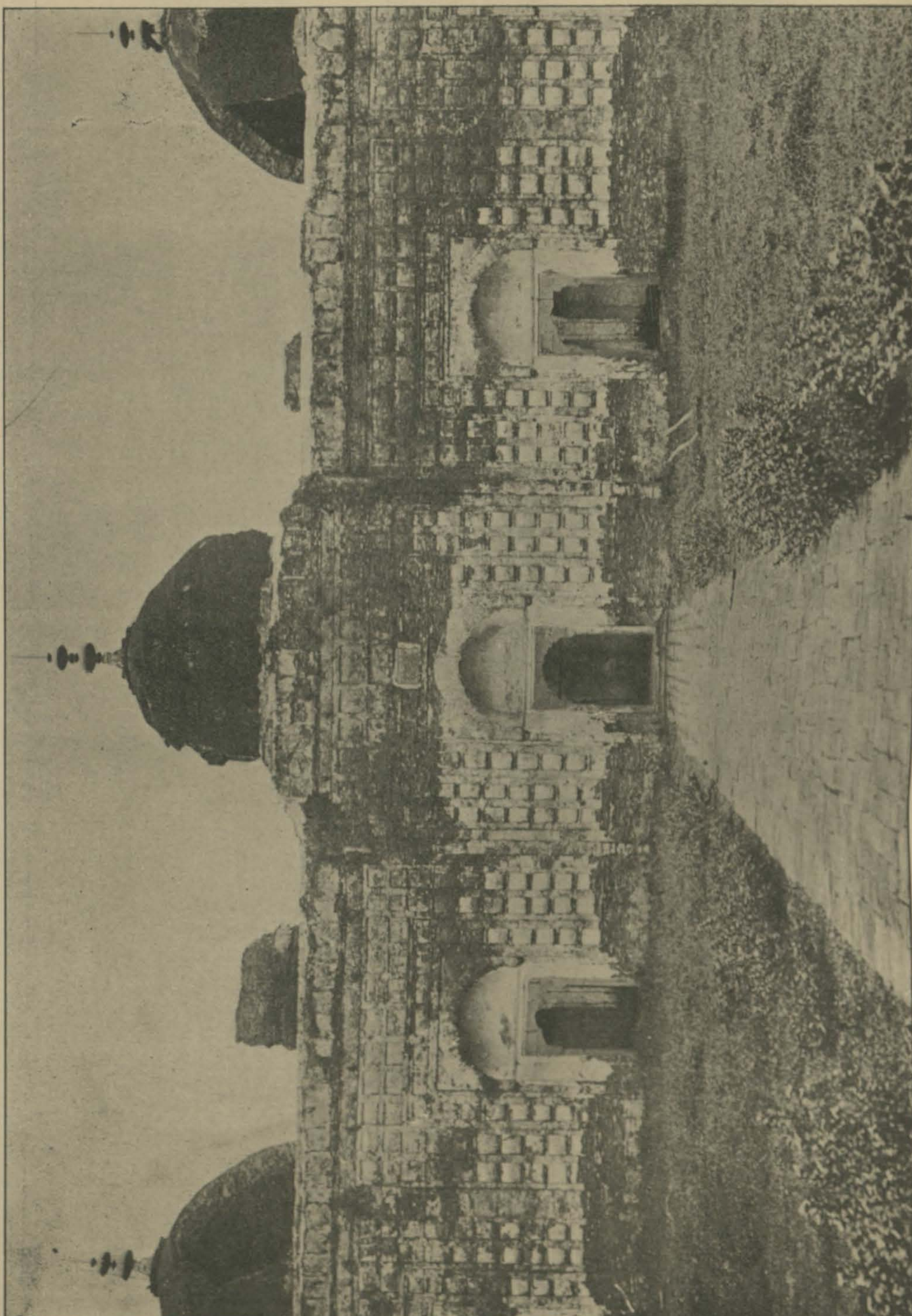
Plate LXXXVI



117. Murshidabad, Katra (1723) with a tower on the left



118. Murshidabad. Katra Mosque (1723), northern half

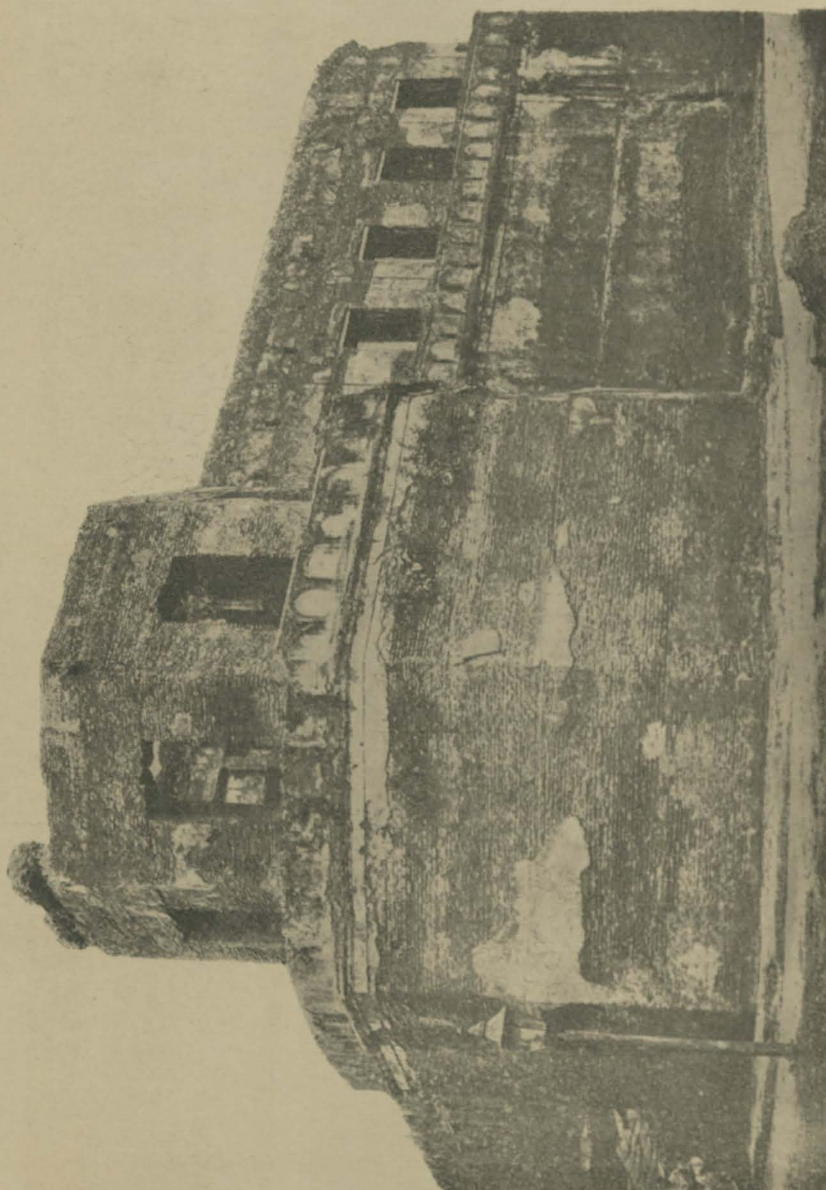


119. Murshidabad. Katra Mosque (1723) the eastern facade

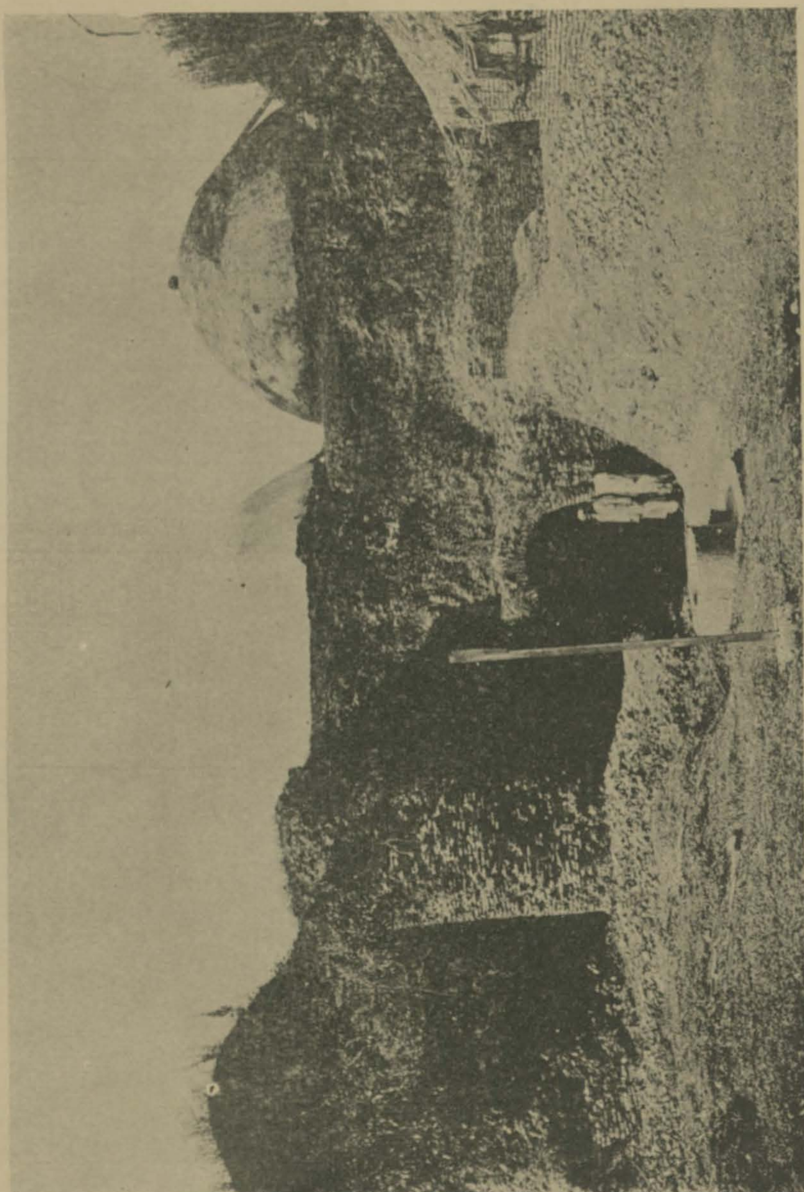
Plate LXXXIX



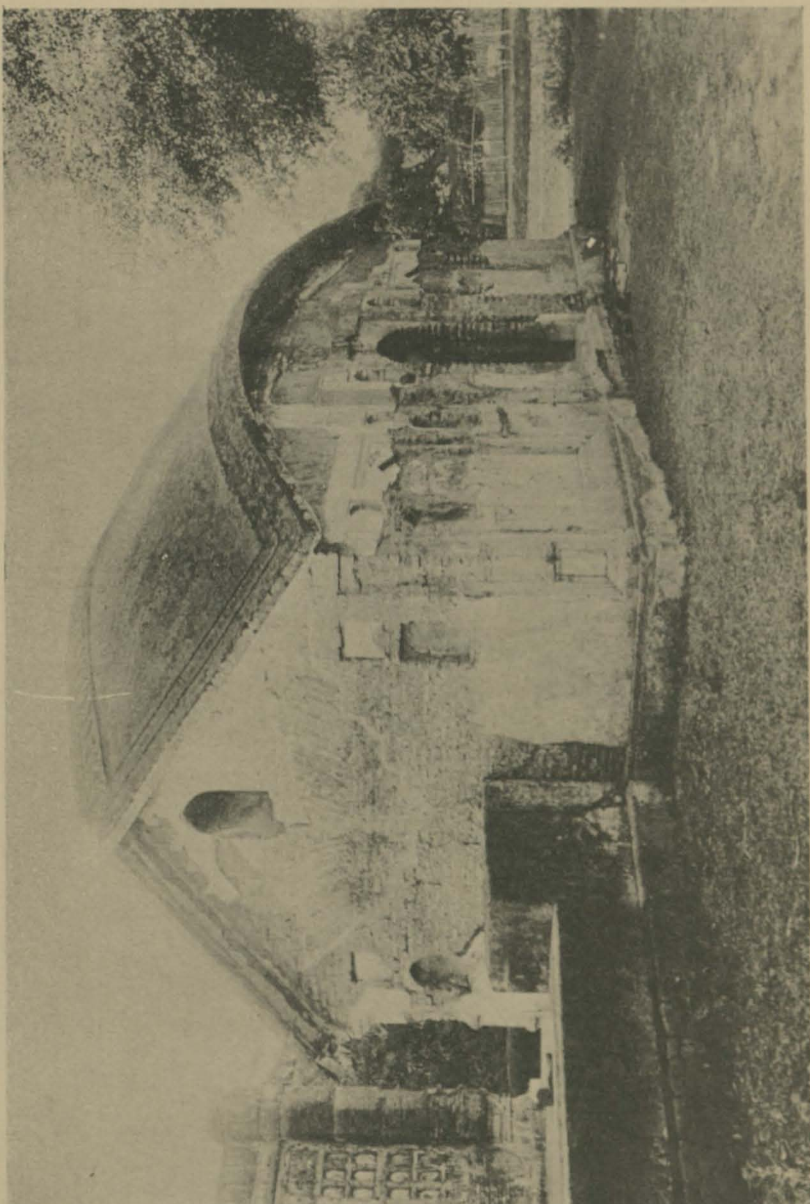
120. Murshidabad. Gateway of the tomb of Alivardi Khan (renovated)



121. Dacca. Lalbagh fort, South-east bastion (1678)

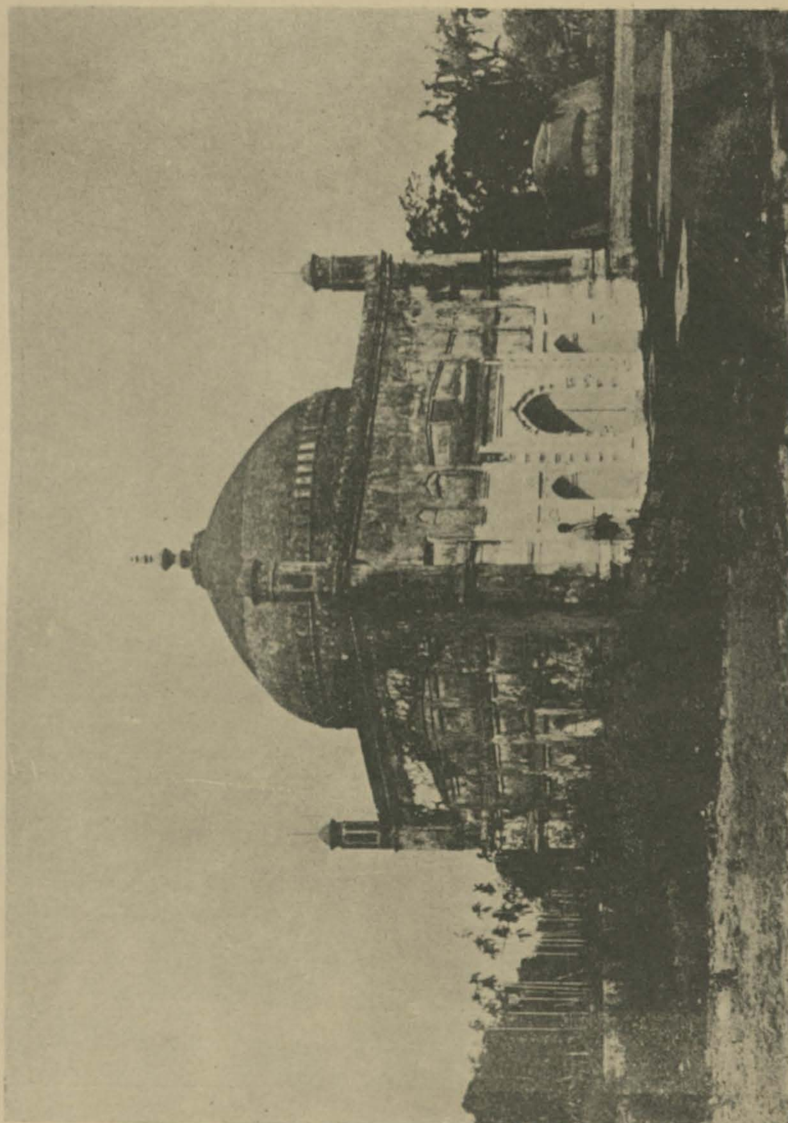


122. Tenga. Mosque (17th century)



129. Egarasindur. Gate of Shah Muhammad's mosque (cir. 1680)

Plate XCV



130. Masjidpara. Mosque (1669)



131. Ishwaripur. Hammam Khana (17th century)

